

THE
CHRISTIAN
IN
COMPLEAT ARMOVR.
Or, a
TREATISE
OF THE

Saints War against the Devil,
wherein a Discovery is made of that grand enemy of God and his People, in his Policies,
Power, Seat of his Empire, Wickednesse, and
chief design he hath against the Saints.

A

MAGAZIN OPEND:

FROM

Whence the Christian is furnished
with Spiritual Armes for the battel, help't on with
his Armour, and taught the use of his Weapon, together with the happy issue of the whole warre.

The First Part.

By *will. Gurnall*, *A. M.* Minister of the Gospel at *Lavenham* in *Suffolk*.

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CHRISTIAN

COMMENTARY

THE

INAGURATION

OF

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*To my Dearly Beloved Friends and
Neighbours, the Inhabitants of Lavenham.*

My Dear Friends,



*S*olomon saith, *The desire of a man is his kindnesse, and a Poore man is better then a liar, Prov. 19. 22.* If you be of his minde, I dare promise these Notes, (which I here devote to your service) a kinde acceptance at your hands. You will finde me to be the *Poore man*, by the mite I present you with; but the hearty desire of your eternal happinesse from which it comes, will (I hope) clear me from being *the liar*. I never could be so serviceable to you, as many Ministers are to their people, having been with you in much weaknesse, and still it is the good pleasure of God, I should be staked down to a short tedder of strength and other abilities; I have reason therefore, (that I may, though not recompence that want, yet expresse my deep sense thereof) to croud the more love into the little I can do for you. And truly my heart is enlarged to you, and to God for you. If any thing makes me loath to be gone into an other world, (which my dropping house bids me above many prepare for) it is not the least, to think I shall leave no more of you walking in the way to eternal life, and you who are on your way thither, in no closer Gospel-order for your mutual help and comfort in your journey: yea, while I am among you, little

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do you think how much of your poor Ministers life lies at your mercy. If I should measure my life by the joy of it, (as indeed who doth not?) Then in some uprightnesse I can say with *Paul*, I live as I see any of you stand fast in the Lord, and die as I see others stand fast in their sins, not to be moved with all the entreaties of the Gospel which have wooed you. And why (my dear friends) should not the life of your soules be much more precious in your own sight then mine? But I forbear, I would not willingly be thought, as some husbands are, to be kinder to you abroad before strangers, then I am at home.

What I present you within this treatise, is a dish from your own table, and so (I hope) will go down the better. You cannot despise it (though the fare be mean) except you will blame your selves who chose the Cook. I cannot be earnest with others, to bestow so much time as to read over these plain Sermons, lest it should be to their losse; it were but to call them from gathering sheaves in the more fruitful labours of others, to glean a few eares, and those but thin also in mine; yet with you my people, I may be a little bold. Physicians say, the mothers milk though not so weighty as an others, if no noxious humour be tasted in it, because natural, is more proper for the childe then a strangers. And, I think, it would not be an error, if I should say it held in the milk which the Minister gives to his flock. A people conscienciously lying at the breasts of their own Minister, (if the milk he gives be wholesome) may expect the blessing of God for their nourishment, though it has not so much lusciousnesse to please the curious taster as some others. Well, whatever these Sermons were, some of those few spirits which you found in hearing, will be missing in the reading

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ing of them. It is as easie to paint fire with the heat, as with pen and ink to commit that to paper, which occurs in preaching. There is as much difference between a Sermon in the Pulpit, and printed in a book, as between milk in the warme breast, and in a sucking bottle, yet what it loseth in the lively tast, is recompenced by the convenience of it. The book may be at hand when the Preacher cannot; and truly, that's the chief end of printing, that as the bottle and spoon is used when the mother is sick or out of the way; so the book, to quiet the Christian and stay his stomack in the absence of the Ordinance. He that readeth Sermons and good bookes at home to save his paines of going to hear, is a thief to his soul in a religious habit: he consults for his ease, but not for his profit; he eats cold meat when he may have hot: He hazards the loosing the benefit of both by contemning of one. If the Spouse could have had her beloved at home, she needed not to have coursed the streets and waited on the publick. O what need we offer sacrifice for sacrifice, rob God of one duty to pay him another? He hath laid our work in better order, one wheel would not interfere with another, if we did more regularly. A chief part of *Dauids* Arithmetick of numbring our dayes, lies in that which we call division, as to cast the account of this our short life so, as to divide the little whole summe thereof into the several portions of time due for the performing of every duty in. An instrument is not in tune, except it have all the strings, and those will not make good musick, if the Musician hath not wisdom to cause every string to speak in its due time; The Christian is not in tune, except he takes in all the duties of his place and calling, neither will the performance of them be harmonious in Gods eare, if every one be not done in
its

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its proper season. O my friends, labour not only to do the duty of your place, but that duty in its own place also. Hear when you should hear. Know your time for closet, & time for shop : & when your retiring hour comes a few minutes now and then spent in taking a repetition of what formerly you heard, shall not (I hope) another day be reckoned with your lost time. The Subject of the Treatise is solemn, *A warre between the Saint and Satan*, & that so bloody a one ; that the cruelest which ever was fought by men, will be found but sport and childe play to this. Alas, what is the killing of bodies to destroying of soules ? 'tis a sad meditation indeed, to think how many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late yeares among us by the sword of man ; But far more astonish'g, to consider how many of those may be sent to hell by the sword of Gods wrath. 'Tis a spiritual war you shall read of, & y^e not a history of what was fought many ages past & is now over ; but of what now is doing, the tragedy is at present acting, & that not at y^e furthest end of the world, but what concerns thee and every one that reads it. The stage whereon this war is fought, is every mans own soul. Here is no Neuter in this war, the whole world is engaged in the quarrel, either for God against Satan, or for Satan against God. It was a great question some yeares past, *Who are you for ?* The not giving a good account to which hath cost many a life. O my dear friends, think solemnly what answer you mean to give God & conscience, when they in a dying houre shall ask every one of you, *Who art thou for ?* 'Tis an incomparable mercy, that you are yet where you may choose your side : It will not be ever so, may be not a day to an end. If once in another world, you must then stand to your colours, yet you may run from the Devils quarters

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quarters, and be taken into Christs pay. The Drum beates in the Gospel for Voluntiers. O, the Lord make you willing in the day of his power. I know you all would be on the surest side. O what can you be sure of, while under the devils Ensign, but damnation? The curse of God cleaves to him and all that takes part with him, O let not the litle plunder & spoil of sinful pleasure and pelf, bewitch you still to follow his Camp. What is that souldier better for his booty he gets in a fight, who before he can get off with it, is himsef slain upon the place? (so many have been served in these wars, if reports be true.) 'Tis that thou must certainly look for. The piece is charg'd, and aime taken at thy breast, which will be thy eternal death if thou persistest. Gods threatenings will go off at last, and then where art thou? where, but in hell, where thy wedge of gold and Babilonish garment, thy wages of unrighteousnesse will do thee litle stead? O Neighbours, I am loath to leave you in the way where Gods bullets flie; but I must have a word for you, my Christian friends, who have espoused Christs quarrel, and are in the field against satan. My heart is towards you, who have thus willingly offered your selves among the Lords people to his help against the mighty. He can destroy him without you, but he takes your love as kindly as if he could not. God hath sent me (as *Jesse* did *David*) with this litle present to you & the rest of my brethren that are in his Camp. May it be but to the strengthning of your hearts and hands in fighting the Lords battels, & I shall bless God that put it into my heart thus to visit you. O hold on, dear friends, in your Christian warfare, let none take the crown from you. *Whet your courage at the throne of grace, from whence all your recruits of soule-strength come. Send faith oft up the hill of the Promise,* * *to*

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to see and bring you the certain newes of Christs coming to you, yea, and assured victory with him. *Reade the exploits,* which Christs Worthies by faith have done, and in their Conquests reade your own, for in them *he spake with us*, as the Prophet of Jacob. *Be thankful for every victory you get*, and let not the howling wilderness, yet before you, put the song of your praises for temptations past out of tune, yet rejoyce with trembling as those who are still in your enemies countrey, and must keep by the sword what you get by the sword: *Be sure you stand in close order amongst your selves*; These times give us too many sad examples of such, who first fell from communion with their Brethren, and then into the devourers hands; straglers are soon snap't; you will find you are safest in a body. *Take heed of a private spirit*; let not onely your particular safety, but of the whole Army of Saints be in your eye and care, especially that company in which you march, (Congregation I mean;) that souldier which can see an enemy in fight with his brethren, and not help them, he makes it but the more easie for the enemy to slay himsele at last; Say not therefore, *Am I my brothers Keeper?* God would not keep him that cared not to keep his brother. Watch over one another, not to play Criticks on your brothers failings, and triumph when he halts, but to help him up if he falls, or if possible, to keep him from falling by a timely rescue, as Abisbai came to Davids succour. *Keep your rank and file.* We see what advantage Satan hath got in these loose times, since we have learnt to fight him out of order, and the private souldier, (Christian I mean) hath taken the officers work out of his hands. *Harden your selves against the scandals, which the cowardize and treachery of false bretheren hath given you.* He is the right souldier

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souldier that is not discouraged by those that run from, or that are slaine in the battel; but still presseth on to victory, though he goes to it over the backs of others that are killed upon the place. In a word, *Disintangle your hearts what you can from the love of, & distracting cares for this present world. No man that warreth intangleth himself with the affaires of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a souldier,* 2 Tim. 2. 4. If it behoves any to have their will ready made, and their worldly interest set at some stay, then surely the souldier: if any souldier, then the Christian. Get but once your hearts mortified to the world, and care rolled upon God, for name, estate, and relations here, and then you are fit to march where-ever Christ will lead you. The want of this hath made many run home to save their own private stake there, when they should have been in the field for Christ. And now, my Christian friends, march on, not in the confidence of your Armor, but in the power of his might, who hath promised shortly to subdue Satan under your feet. I have done, onely I must crave pardon of you, for rending this part of the Treatise from the other, which neither my little strength, or leisure would suffer me to grasp at once.

But this having first put forth its hand in preaching, can make no great breach upon that, though it get the start a little in printing. Let me therefore, dear friends, (if God shall make this imperfect birth, any way serviceable to your faith,) humbly desire, that you would as continue to strive at the throne of grace for a blessing on my poor Ministry among you, so also lift up a prayer that strength may be given, to bring forth what of this yet is undeliver'd. I do not send you thither where I intend not to meet you, but shall desire grace to be found

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faithfull in striving with you, and for you, that amongst those who finde any spiritual advantage from my weak labours, you to whom they are chiefly devoted may not receive the least.

Lavenham
Jan. 1.
1655.

So prayeth your affectio-

nate, though unworthy

Minister,


WILL. GURNALL.

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A
TREATISE
Of the whole
ARMOUR OF GOD.

THE INTRODUCTION.

EPHESIANS 6. 10.

*Finally, my Brethren, be strong in the
Lord, and in the power of his might.*



Paul was now in bonds, yet not so close kept as to be denied pen and paper: God (it seems) gave him some favour in the sight of his enemies: Paul was Nero's prisoner; Nero was much more Gods. And while God had work for Paul, he found him friends both in Court and prison. Let persecutors send the Saints to prison, God can provide a Keeper for their turne.

But how doth this great Apostle spend his time in prison; not in publishing invectives against those, (though the worst of men) who had laid him in: a piece of zeal which the holy sufferers of those times were little acquainted with: Nor in politic counsels how he might wind himself out of his trouble, by sordid flattery of, or sinful compliance with the great ones of the times. Some would have used any pick-lock to have opened a passage

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to

to their liberty, and not scruple, (so escape they might) whether they got out at the door or window: But this holy man was not so fond of liberty or life, as to purchase them with the least hazard to the Gospel. He knew too much of another world to bid so high for the enjoying of this, and therefore he is at a point what his enemies can do with him, well knowing he could go to heaven whether they would or no; No, the great care which lay upon him was for the Churches of Christ: as a faithful Steward, he labours to set this House of God in order before his departure. We read of no dispatches sent to Court to procure his liberty, but many to the Churches to help them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. There is no such way to be even with the devil and his instruments for all their spite against us, as by doing what good we can, wherever we become. The devil had as good have let *Paul* alone; for he no sooner comes into prison, but he falls a preaching, at which the gates of Satans prison flie open, and poor sinners come forth. Happy for *Onesimus* that *Paul* was sent to Jaile; God had an errand for *Paul* to do to him and others, which the devil never dream't of. Nay, he doth not onely preach in prison, but that he may do the devil all the mischief he can, he sends his Epistles to the Churches; that tasting his Spirit in his afflictions, and reading his faith, now ready to be offered up, they might much more be confirmed, amongst which *Ephesus* was not least in his thoughts, as you may perceive by his abode with them two yeares together, *Acts 19. 10.* as also by his sending for the Elders of this Church as far as *Miletus* , in his last journey to *Jerusalem* , *Acts 20. 17.* to take his farewell of them, as never to see their face in this world more. And surely the sad impression which that heart-breaking departure left upon the spirits of these Elders, yea, the whole Church, (by them acquainted with this mournful newes,) might stir up *Paul* , now in prison, to writ unto this Church, that having so much of his Spirit, yea, of the Spirit of the Gospel left in their hands to converse with, they might more patiently take the newes of his death.

In the former part of this Epistle, he soares high in the mysteries of faith. In the latter, according to his usual method, he descends to Application; where we finde him contracting all those

those truthes, as beames together in a powerful exhortation, the more to enkindle their hearts, and powerfully perswade them to walk worthy of their vocation, chap. 4. 1. which then is done, when the Christians life is transparent, that the grace of the Gospel shines forth in the power of holines on every side, and from all his relations, as a candle in a Crytal glasse, not in a dark Lanthorn, light some one way, and dark another: and therefore he runs over the several relations of *Husband, Wife, Parents, Children, Master and Servants*, and presseth the same in all the e.

Now having set every one in his proper place, about his particular duty: as a wise General after he hath ranged his Army, and drawn them forth into rank and file: he makes this following speech at the head of this *Ephesian Camp*, all in martial phra'se, as best suiting the Christians calling, which is a continued warfare with the world, and the Prince of the world. The speech it self contains two parts;

First, a short but sweet and powerful encouragement, ver. 10.

Secondly, the other part is spent in several directions, for the'r managing this war the more succesfully, with some motives here and there sprinkled among them. To begin with the first.

1. The word of encouragement to battel. With this he begins his speech; *Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord*: the best way indeed to prepare them for the following directions. A soul deeply possesst with fear, and dispirited with strong impressions of danger, is in no posture for counsel. As we see in an Army when put to the run with some suddenn alarm, and apprehensions of danger; 'tis hard ralling them into order while the scare and feare is over; therefore the Apostle first raiseth up their spirits, *Be strong in the Lord*: as if he should say, perhaps some drooping souls finde their hearts faile them, while they see their enemies so strong, and they so weak; so numerous, and they so few; so well appointed, and they so naked and unarmed; so skilful and expert at armes, but they green and raw soldiers, I et not these or any other thoughts dismay you, but with undaunted courage march on, and *be strong in the Lord*; on whose performance lies the streffe of the battel, and not on your

skill or strength : It is not the least of a Ministers care, and skill in dividing the Word, so to presse the Christians duty, as not to oppresse his Spirit with the weight of it, by laying it on the creatures own shoulders, and not on the Lords strength, as here our Apostle teacheth us.

1. In this verse ; First, here is a familiar Compellation; *My brethren.*
2. Secondly, here is the exhortation; *Be strong.*
3. Thirdly, here is a cautionary direction annexed to the exhortation ; *In the Lord.*
4. Fourthly, here is an encouraging amplification of the direction ; *And in the power of his might,* or in his mighty power.

CHAP. I.

Of Christian Courage and Resolution, *wherefore necessary, and how obtained.*

WE shall wave the Compellation, and begin with the Exhortation : *Be strong*, that is, be of good courage, so commonly used in Scripture-ph ase; *2 Chron 32. 7. Be strong and courageous.* So, *Isa. 35. 4. Say to them that are of a fearfull heart, Be strong :* or, unite all the powers of your souls, and muster up your whole force, you will have use of all you can make or get. From whence the Point is this.

Doth.

The Christian of all men needs courage and Resolution indeed there is nothing he doth as a Christian, or can do, but is an act of valour : A cowardly spirit is beneath the lowest duty of a Christian : *Josh. 1. 7. Be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest : what ? stand in battel against those world-like Nations ? No, But that thou mayest observe to do according to all the Law, which Moses my servant commanded thee.* It requires more prowesse and greatnesse of spirit to obey God faithfully, then to command an Army of men, to be a Christian then to be a Captain. What seems lesse, then for a Christian to pray ? yet this cannot be performed aright, without a Princely Spirit ; As Jacob is said

to behave himselfe like a *Prince*, when he did but pray: for which he came out of the field Gods *Bannarite*. Indeed if you call that prayer, which a carnal person performes, nothing more poor and *assard-like*. Such a one is as great a stranger to this enterprize, as the craven souldier is to the exploits of a valiant Chieftain. The Christian in prayer comes up close to God with an humble boldnesse of faith, and takes hold of him, wrestles with him, yea, will not let him go without a blessing, and all this in the face of his owne sins and divine justice, which let slie upon him from the fiery mouth of the Law; while the others boldness in prayer is but the childe, either of ignorance in his minde, or hardnesse in his heart; whereby not feeling his sins, and not knowing his danger, he rushes upon duty with a blinde confidence, which soon quails, when conscience awakes and gives him the alarm, that his sins are upon him, as the *Philistines* or *Samson*; alas, then in a fright the poor-spirited wretch throwes down his weapon, flies the presence of God with guilty *Adam*. and dares not look him on the face. Indeed there is no duty in a Christians whole course of walking with God, or acting for God, but is lined with many difficulties, which shoot like enemies through the hedges at the Christian, whilest he is marching towards Heaven: so that he is put to dispute every inch of ground as he goes. They are only a few noble-spirited soules, (who dare take Heaven by force) that are fit for this call ng. For the further proof of this Point, see some few pieces of service that every Christian engageth in.

First, the Christian's to proclaim and prosecute an irreconcilable war against his bosome sins, those sins which have layn nearest his heart, must now be tempered under his feet: So *David*, I have kept my self from my iniquity; now what courage and resolution doth this require? you think *Abraham* was tried to purpose, when called to take his son, his son *Isaac*, his only son whom he loved, and offer him up with his own hands, and no other, yet what was that to this? Soul, take thy lust, thy only lust, which is the child of thy dearest love, thy *Isaac*, the sin which hath caused most joy and laughter: from which thou hast promised thy selfe the greatest returne of pleasure or profit: as ever thou lookest to see my face with comfort, lay hands on it, and offer it up: poure out the blood of it before me, run

Gen. 22. 1.

the sacrificing knife of mortification into the very heart of it, and this freely, joyfully, (for it is no pleasing sacrifice that is offered with a countenance cast downe,) and all this now, before thou hast one embrace more from it. Truly this is a hard chapter, flesh and blood cannot bear this saying; our lust will not lie so patiently on the Altar, as *Isaac*, or as a *Lambe that is brought to the slaughter, which is dumb*, but will roar and shriek, yea, even shake and rend the heart with their hideous out-cries. Who is able to expresse the conflicts, the wrestlings, the convulsions of Spirit the Christian feels, before he can bring his heart to this work? or who can fully set forth the Art, the Rhetorical insinuations, which such a lust will plead with for its life? one while Satan will extenuate and mince the matter. It is but a little one, O spare it, and thy soule shall live for all that: Another while he flatters the soule with the secrecy of it, Thou mayest keep me and thy credit also; I will not be seen abroad in thy company to shame the among thy neighbours: shut me up in the most retired room thou hast in thy heart, from the hearing of others (if thou wilt,) only let me now and then have the wanton embraces of thy thoughts and affections in secret; if that cannot be granted, then Satan will seem only to desire execution may be staid a while, as *Jephtha's daughter* of her father, *let me alone a month or two, and then do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth*: well knowing few such reprieved lusts, but at last obtain their full pardon; yea, recover their favour with the soule. Now what resolution doth it require to break through such violence and importunity, and notwithstanding all this, to do present execution: Here the valiant Swordmen of the world, have shewed themselves meer cowards, who have come out of the field with victorious banners, and then lived, yea, died slaves to a base lust at home. As one could say of a great Romane Captain, (who as he rode in his triumphant Chariot through *Rome*, had his eye never off a Courtizan that walk't along the street) Behold how this godly Captain that conquered such potent Armies, is himselfe conquered by one silly woman.

Judg. 17.
v. 2. 37.

2. Secondly, the Christian is to walk singularly, not after the worlds guise: *Rom. 12. 2.* we are commanded not to be conformed to this world, that is, not to accommodate our selves to the

the corrupt customes of the world. The Christian must not be of such a complying nature, to cut the coat of his Profession according to the fashion of the times, or the humour of the company he falls into, like that Courtier, who being ask't how he could keep his preferment in such changing times, which one while had a Prince for Popery, another while against Popery? answered, he was *Esalice, non ex quereu ortus*: he was not a stubborn oake, but bending osier, that could yield to the winde: No, the Christian must stand fixt to his principles, and not change his habit, but freely shew what Countryman he is by his holy constancy in the truth. Now what an *odium*, what snares, what dangers doth this singularity expose the Christian to? Some will hoot and mock him, as one in a *Spanish* fashion would be laugh't at in your streets. This *Michal* flouted *David*. Indeed the World counts the Christian for his singularity of life the only foole; which I have thought gave the first occasion to that nick-name, whereby men commonly expresse a silly man or a fool: Such a one (say they) is a meer *Abraham*, that is in the worlds account a foole. But why an *Abraham*? because *Abraham* did that which carnal reason (the worlds idol) laughs at as meere folly: he left a present estate in his fathers house, to go he knew not whither, to receive an inheritance he knew not when. And truly such fools all the Saints are branded for, by the wise world. *You know the man and his communication*, said *Jehu* to his companions, asking what that mad fellow came for, who was no other then a Prophet, *2 Kings 9. 11*. Now this requires courage to despise the shame, Which the Christian must expect to meete withal for his singularity. Shame is that which proud nature most disdaines, to avoid which many durst not confesse Christ openly; many love heaven, because they are ashamed to go in a foolers coat thither. Again as some will mock, so others will persecute to death, meerly for this non-conformity in the Christians principles and practices to them. This was the trap laid for the three children; they must dance after *Nebuchadnezzars* pipe, or burne. This was the plot laid to insnare *Daniel*, who walk't so unblameably, that his very enemies gave him this testimony, that he had no fault, but his singularity in his Religion, *Dan. 6. 5*. 'Tis a great honour to a Christian, yea to Religion it selfe, when all their enemies can say, is, they are precise, and will not do

Joh. 7. 13.

do as we do. Now in such a case as this, when the Christian must turne or burne; leave praying, or become a prey to the cruel teeth of bloody men; how many pol tick retreats, and selfe-preserved distinctions would a cowardly unresolved heart invent? The Christian, that hath so great opposition had need be well lock't into the saddle of his Profession, or else he will be soon dismounted,

3. Thirdly, the Christian must keep on his way to heaven in the midst of all the scandals that are cast upon the wayes of God by the Apostasie and foul falls of false Professors. There were ever such in the Church, who by their sad miscarriages in judgement and practise, have laid a stone of offence in the way of Profession, at which weak Christians are ready to make a stand, (as they at the bloody body of *Absbel*;) not knowing whether they may venture any further in their Profession. See *ng* such (whose gifts they so much admir'd) lie before them, wallowing in the blood of their blaine Profession: of zealous professors to prove, perhaps, fiery persecutors; of strict Performers of religious duties, irreligious Atheists: no more like the men they were some yeares past, then the vale of *Sodom*, (now a bog and quagmire) is, to what it was, when for fruitfullnesse compared to the garden of the Lord. We had need have a holy resolution to beare up against such discouragements, and not to faile: as *Joshuab*; who lived to see the whole Camp of *Israel* (a very few excepted) revolting, and in their hearts turning back to *Egypt*, and yet with an undaunt Spirit maintained his integrity, yea, resolved though not a man beside would beare him company, yet he would serve the Lord.

4. Fourthly, the Christian must trust in a withdrawing God, *Isa. 50, v. 10. Let him that walks in darknesse, and sees no light, trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* This requires a holy boldnesse of faith indeed to venture into Gods presence, as *Esther* into *Abasuerus*, when no smile is to be seen on his face, no golden scepter of the promise perceived by the soule, as held forth to embolden it to come near, then to presse in with this noble resolution; *If I perish, I perish.* Nay more, to trust not only in a withdrawing but a killing God; not when his love is hid, but when his wrath breakes forth: Now for a soule to make its approaches to God by a recumbency of faith, while God seemes

to fire upon it, and shoot his frownes like envenomed arrows into it. This is hard work, and will trie the Christians mettall to purpose. Yet (such a masculine spirit we finde in that poore woman of *Canaan*, who takes up the bullets Christ shot at her and with an humble boldnesse of faith sends them back again in her prayer.

Fifthly, the believer is to persevere in his Christian course to the end of his life, his work and his life must go off the stage together. This addes weight to every other difficulty of the Christians calling: We have known many who have gone into the field, and liked the work of a souldier for a battell or two, but soon have had enough, and come running home again, but few can bear it as a constant trade. Many are soon engaged in holy duties, easily perswaded to take up a Profession of Religion, and as easily perswaded to lay it down; like the new Moon, which shines a little in the first part of the night, but is down before half the night be gone; lightsome Professors in their youth, whose old age is waapt up in thick darknesse of sin and wickednesse: O this persevering is a hard word! this taking up the cross daily, this praying alwayes, this watching night and day, and never laying aside our clothes and armour, I mean indulging our selves to remit and unbend in our holy waiting on God, and walking with God; this sends many sorrowful away from Christ, yet this is the Saints duty, to make Religion his every day work, without any vacation from one end of the yeare to the other. These few instances are enough to shew what need the Christian hath of resolution. The application followes.

This gives us then a reason why there are so many Professors, *Use 1.* and so few Christians indeed; so many that run, and so few obtain; so many go into the field against Satan, and so few come out Conquerours; because all have a desire to be happy, but few have courage and resolution to grapple with the difficulties, that meet them in the way to their happinesse. All *Israel* came joyfully out of *Egypt* under *Moses* his conduct, yea, and a mixed multitude with them, but when their bellies were a little pinched with hunger, and their greedy desires of a present *Canaan* deferred, yea, in stead of peace and plenty, war and penury, they (like white-liver'd souldiers) are ready to flie from their colours
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and make a dishonourable retreat into *Egypt*. Thus the greatest part of those who professe the Gospel, when they come to push of pike, to be tried what they will do, deny, endure for Christ, grow sick of their enterprise: alas, their hearts fail them they are like the waters of *Bethlehem*; but if they must dispute their passage with so many enemies, they will even content themselves with their own Cistern, and leave heaven to others that will venture more for it. Oh how many part with Christ, at this crosse-way! like *Orpah* they go a furlong or two with Christ, while he goes to take them off from their worldly hopes, and bids them prepare for hardship, and then they fairly kisse and leave him, loath indeed to loose heaven, but more loath to buy it at so deare a rate. Like some green heads, that childishly make choice of some sweet trade (such as is the Confessioners) from a liquorish tooth they have to the junkets it affords, but meeting with soure sauce of labour and toile that goes with them, they give in, and are weary of their service; the sweet bait of Religion hath drawn many to nibble at it, who are offended with the hard service it calls to; It requires another spirit then the world can give or receive to follow Christ fully.

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Let this then exhort you, Christians, to labor for this holy resolution and prowess, which is so needful for your Christian Profession, that without it you cannot be what you professe. *The fearful* are in the forlorne of those that march for hell, *Rev. 21.* the violent and valiant are they, which take heaven by force: Cowards never wan heaven Say not, thou hast royal blood running in the veins, and art begotten of God, except thou canst prove thy pedigree by this herioick spirit, to dare to be holy in spite of men and devils. The Eagle tries her young ones by the Sun, Christ tries his children by their courage, that dare look on the face of death and danger for his sake, *Mark 8. 34, 35.* Oh how uncomly a sight is it a bold sinner and a fearful Saint: one resolved to be wicked, and a christian wavering in his holy course! to see guilt out innocency to flight, and hell keep the field, impudently braving it with displayed banners of open profaneness: and Saints to hide their colours for shame, or run from them for feare, who should rather wrap themselves in them, and lie upon the place, then thus betray the glorious Name of God, which is called upon by them to the scorn of the
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uncircumcised. Take heart therefore, O ye Saints, and be strong: your cause is good, God himselfe espouseth your quairrel, who hath appointed you his own Son, General of the field, called *The Captain of our salvation*. He shall lead you on with courage, and bring you off with honour. He lived and died for you, he will live and die with you: for mercy and tenderesse to his souldiers, none like him. *Trajan*, 'tis said, rent his clothes to binde up his souldiers wounds; Christ poured out his blood as balm to heal his Saints wounds, teares of his flesh to bind them up. For prowesse, none to compare with him: he never turn'd his head from danger: no, not when hells malice and heavens justice appeared in field against him; *Knowing all that should come upon him, went forth and said, Whom seek ye?* John 18.4. For successe insuperable: he never lost battel even when he lost his life: he wan the field, carrying the spoiles thereof in the triumphant chariot of his Ascension to heaven with him: where he makes an open shew of them to the unspeakable joy of Saints and Angels. You march in the midst of gallant spirits, your fellow-souldiers, every one the Son of a Prince: Behold, some (enduring with you here below a great fight of afflictions and temptation,) take heaven by storme and force: Others you may see after many assaults, repulses and rallyings of their faith and patience, got upon the walls of heaven Conquerours: from whence they do, as it were, look downe, and call you their fellow brethren on earth, to march up the hill after them, crying aloud. Fall on, and the city is your own, as now it is ours, who for a few dayes conflict, are now crowned with heavens glory, one moments enjoyment of which hath dried up all our teares, healed all our wounds, and made us forget the sharpnesse of the fight, with the joy of our present victory. In a word, Christians, God and Angels are Spectatours, observing how you quit your selves like children of the most High; every exploit your faith doth against sin and Satan, causeth a shout in heaven; while you valiantly prostrate this temptation, scale that difficulty, regain the other ground you even now lost out of your enemies hands. Your deare Saviour, (who stands by with a reserve for your relief at a pinch) his very hearts leaps within him for joy to see the proof of your love to him and zeal for him in all your combates; and will not forget all the faithful service

you have done in his wars on earth: but when thou comest out of the field, will receive thee wth the like joy, as he was entertained himselfe at his returne to heaven of his Father. Now Christian, if thou meanest thus courageously to bear up against all opposition, in the march to heaven, as thou shouldest do well, to raise thy spirit with such generous and soul ennobling thoughts, so in an especial manner look thy principles be well fixt, or else thy heart will be unstable, and an unstable heart is weak as water, it cannot excel in courage. Two things are required to fix our principles

First, an established judgement in this truth of God. He that knows not well what or whom he fights for, and soon be persuaded to change his side or at least stand neuter: such may be found that go for Professours, that can hardly give an account what they hope for, or whom they hope in; yet Christians they must be thought though they run before they know their errand: so if they have some principles they go upon, they are so unsettled, that every wind blows them down, like loose stiles from the house top. Blinde zeale is soon put to a shameful retreat while holy resolution, built on fast principles, lifts up its head, like a rock in the midst of the waves. *Those that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits, Dan 11.32.* The Angel told Daniel who were the men that would stand to their tackling, and bear up for God in that hour, both of temptation and persecution, which should be brought upon them by Antiochus; not all the Jewes, some of them should be corrupt basely by flatteries, others scared by threats out of their Profession, only a few of fixed principles, who knew their God whom they served, and were grounded in their Religion, these should be strong, and do exploits, that is, to flatteries they should be incorruptable, and to power and force unconquerable.

2. Secondly, a sincere aime at the right end in our Profession. Let a man be never so knowing in the things of Christ, if his aime be not right in his Profession, that mans principles will hang loose, hee'l not venture much or far for Christ, no more, no further then he can save his owne stake. A hypocrite may shew some mettall at hand, some courage for a spurt in conquering some difficulties, but hee'l shew himselfe a jade at length. He that hath a false end in his Profession, will soon come to an end

end of his Profession, when he is pinch't on that toe where his corn is: I meane, called to deny that his naughty heart aimed at all this while, now his heart failes him, he can go no further. O take heed of this squint eye to our profit, pleasure, honour or any thng beneath Christ an d heaven; for they will take away your heart, as the prophet saith of *wine and women*, that is, our love, an d if our love be taken away there will be little courage left for Christ. How courageous was *Jehu* at first, and he tells the world it is zeale for God: but why doth his heart faile him then, before half his work be done? his heart was never right set, that very thing that stirr'd up his zeal at first, at last quench't an d cow'd it, and that was his ambition; his desire of a Kingdom n a'e him zealous again't *Ababs* house, to cut off the n (who might in time jussle him besides the throne) which done, an d he quietly settle, he dare not go through sutch with Go's work, lest he should lose what he got by provoking the people with a thorough Reformation. Like some soldiers, when once they meet with a rich booty at the sacking of some town, are spoild for fighting ever after.



CHAP. II.

Of the Saints strength, where it lies, and wherefore laid up in God.

THe second Branch of the words followeth, which contains a cautionary direction. Having exhorted the Saints at *Ephesus*, and in them all bel evers to a holy resolution and courage in their warfare; lest this should be mistaken, and beget in them an opinion of their own strength for the battel, the Apostle leads them out of themselves for this strength, even to the Lord; *Be strong in the Lord*. From whence observe,

That the Christians strength lies in the Lord, not in him self. The strength of the General in other hostes lies in his troops; *Doz.* he flies, as a great Commander once said to his souldiers, upon

their wings: if their feathers be clipt, their power broken, he is lost; but in the Army of Saints, the strength of every Saint, yea, of the whole hoste of Saints lies in the Lord of hostes. God can overcome his enemies without their hands, but they cannot so much as defend themselves without his arme. It is one of Gods names, *The strength of Israel*, 1 Sam. 15. 19. He was the strength of Davids heart, without him this valiant Worthy (that could, when held up in his armes, defie him that defied an whole Army) behaves himselfe strangely for feare, at a word or two that drop't from the Philistines mouth. He was the strength of his hands, *He taught his fingers to fight*, and so he is the strength of all his Saints in their war against sin and Satan. Some propound a question, whether there be a sin committed in the will, in which Satan hath not a part? but if the question were whether there be any holy action performed without the special assistance of God concurring? that is resolved, *John 15. 5. Without me you can do nothing.* Thinking strength of God, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God.* We Apostles, we Saints that have habitual grace, yet this lies like water at the bottome of a Well, which will not ascend with all our pumping till God poure in his exciting grace, and then it comes. To will is more then to think, to exert our will into action, more then both; these are of God, *Phil. 2. 13. It is God that worketh in you to will, and to do of his good pleasure.* He makes the heart new, and having made it fit for heavenly motion, setting eve y wheele (as it were) in its right place, then he windes it up by his actuating grace, and sets it on going, the thoughts to stir, the will to move, and make towards the holy object presented; ye here the chariot is set, and cannot ascend the hill of action, till God puts his shoulder to the wheele, *Rom. 7. To will is present with me, but how to performe that which is good I finde not.* God is at the bottome of the ladder, and at the top also, the Author and Finisher, yea, helping and lifting the soule at eve y round, in his ascent to any holy action. Well, now the Christian is set on work, how long will he keep close to it? Alas, poore soule, no longer then he is held up by the same hand, that impowered him at first. He hath soon wrought out the strength received, and therefore to maintain the tenure of a holy course, there must be
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renewing strength from heaven every moment, which David knew, and therefore when his heart was in as ho'y a frame as ever he felt it. and his people by their free-will offering declare the same: yet even then he prayes, that God would *keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of his people, and establish their hearts to him,* 1 Chron. 29. 18. He adored the mercy that made them willing, and then he implores his further grace to strengthen them, and tie a knot; that these precious peales newly strung on hearts, might not slip off. The Christian, when fullest of divine communications, is but a glasse without a foot, he cannot stand, or hold what he hath received any longer, then God holds him in his strong hand. Therefore Christ, when bound for heaven, and ready to take his leave of his children, bespeakes his Fathers care of them in his absence; *Father keep them:* as if he had said, they must not be left alone, Iohn. 17. they are poor shiftlesse children, that can neither stand nor go without help; they will lose the grace, I have given them, and fall into those temptations which I kept them from while I was with them. if they be out of thy eye or armes but one moment; and therefore, *Father keep them.*

Again, Consider the Christian, as addressing himselfe to any duty of Gods worship, still his strength is in the Lord; Would he pray? where will he finde materials for his prayer? alas, *he knows not what to pray for as he ought.* Let him alone, and he will soon pray himselfe into some temptations or other, and cry for Rom. 8, that which were cruelty in God to give; and therefore God puts words in our mouths; *Take words with you, and say,* Hos. 14. 2. Well, now he hath words put into his mouth; alas, they will freeze in his very lips, if he hath not some heart heating affections to thaw the tap: and where shall this fire be had? not a spark to be found on his own hearth: except it be some strange fire of natural desires, which will not serve: whence then must the fire come to thaw the iciness of the heart, but from heaven? The Spirit, he must stretch himselfe upon the soule, (as the Prophet on the childe) and then the soule will come to some kindly warmth, and heavenly heat it his affections? the Spirit must groan, and then the soule will groan: he helps us to the sighs and groans, which turne the fables of prayer. He dissolves the heart, and then it bursts out of the heart by groans of the lips

- lips by heavenly Rhethorick, out of the eyes as from a fountaine with teares: ye further now the creature is enabled to wrestle with God in prayer, what will he get by all this? suppose he be weak in grace, is he able to pray himselfe strong, or corrupt on weak? no, this is not to be found in prayer, as an act of the creature: this drops from heaven above. *In the day that I cried, thou answeredst me, and gavest me strength in my soule.*
- Psal. 138. 2.* David received it in duty, but had it not from his duty, but from his God. He did not pray himselfe strong, but God strengthened him in his prayer. Well cast your eye once more upon the Christian, as engaging in another Ordinance of hearing the Word preach't. The soules strength to heare the Word is from God, *he opens the heart to attend*, yea, he opens the understanding of the Saint to receive the Word, so as to conceive what it meant. It is like *Samsons* riddle which we cannot unfold without his Heifer: He opens the wombe of the soule to conceive by it, as the understanding to conceive of it, that the barren soule becomes a *joyful mother of children*. David sate for halfe a year under the publick Lectures of the Law, and the wombe of his heart shut up, till *Nathan* comes and God with him, and now is the time of life, he conceives presently, yea, and brings forth in the same day, falls presently into the bitter pangs of sorrow for his sins, which went not over till he had cast them forth in that sweet *Psalme 51*. Why should this one word work more, then all the former, but that God now struck in with his Word, which he did not before? He is therefore said to *teach his people to profit*; he sits in heaven that teacheth hearts. When Gods Spirit (who is the Head-master) shall call a soul from his Usher to himselfe, and say, Soul, you have not gone the way to receive by hearing the Word, thus, and thus conceive of such a truth, improve such a promise, presently the eyes of his understanding open, and his heart burnes within him, while he speaks to him. Thus you see the truth of this Point, That the Christians strength is in the Lord. Now we shall give some demonstrations.
- Isa. 48. 17.*

SECT. 1

The first Rea'son may be taken from the nature of the Saints and their grace, both are creatures, they and their grace also: *now Inesse est de esse creaturæ.* 'Tis in the very nature of the creature, to depend on God its Maker, both for being and operation. Can you conceive an accident to be out of its subject, whitenesse out of the wall, or some other subject? 'Tis as impossible that the creature should be, or act without strength from God: This, to be, act in and of himselfe, is so incommunicable a property of the Deity, that he cannot impart it to his creature: *God is, and there is none besides him*: when God made the world, it is said indeed he ended his work, that is, of Creation: he made no new species and kindes of creatures more; but to this day he hath not ended his work of Providence; *Hitherto my Father worketh*, saith Christ, *John 5. 17.* that is, in preserving and empowering what he hath made with strength to be and act, and therefore he is said to *hold our soules in life*. Works of Art, which man makes, when finish't may stand some time without the Workmans help, as the house when the Carpenter hath made it is lea'd; but God's works both of nature and grace are never off his hand, and therefore as the Father is said to work hitherto for the preservation of the works of nature, so the Son, to whom is committed the work of Redemption, he tells us *he worketh also*. Neither ended he his work, when he rose again, any other ways then his Father did in the work of Creation. God made an end of making, so Christ made an end of purchasing mercy, grace and glory for believers by once dying; and as God rested at the end of the Creation, so he, when he had wrought eternal Redemption, and by himselfe purged our sins, *sate downe on the right hand of the Majesty on High*, Heb. 1. 3. But he ceaseth not to work by his intercession with God for us, and by his Spirit in us for Gods, whereby he upholds his Saints, their graces, and comforts in life, without which they would run to ruine. Thus we see as grace is a creature, the Christian depends on God for his strength. But further,

Secondly the Christians grace is not only a creature, but a

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weak creature, conflicting with enemies stronger then it selfe, and therefore cannot keep the field without an auxiliary strength from Heaven. The weakest goes to the wall, if no succour comes in. Grace in this life is but weak, like a King in the Cradle, which gives advantage to Satan, to carry on his plots more strongly, to the disturbance of this young Kings reigne in the soule, yea, he would soon make an end of the war in the ruine of the Believers grace, did not Heaven take the Christian into protection. 'Tis true indeed, grace where ever it is, hath a principle in it selfe, that makes it desire and endeavour to preserve it self according to its strength, but being over-powered must perish, except assisted by God, as fire in green wood, (which deads and damps the part kindled) will in time go out except blowne up, or more fire put to that little; so will grace in the heart. God brings his grace into the heart by Conquest: now as in a conquered City, though some yield, and become true Subjects to the Conquerour, yet others plot how they may shake off this yoke; and therefore it requires the same power to keep, as was to win it at first. The Christian hath an unregenerate part, that is, discontented at this new change in the heart, and disdaines as much to come under the sweet government of Christs Septer, as the *Sodomites* that *Let* should judge them. What, this fellow, a *Stranger*, controule us? An! Satan heads this mutinous rout against the Christian: so that if God should not continually re-inforce this his new-planted Colony in the heart, the very natives (I mean corruptions) that are left, would come out of their dens and holes where they lie lurking, and eat up the little grace the holiest on earth hath, it would be as bread to these devourers.

3. A third demonstration may be taken from the grand designe, which God propounds to himselfe in the Saints salvation; yea, in the transaction of it from first to last. And that is twofold.

1. First, God would bring his Saints to heaven in such a way, as might be most expressive of his deare love and mercy to them.

2. Secondly, he would so expresse his mercy and love to them, as might rebound back to him, in the highest advance of his own glory possible: Now how becoming this is to both, that
Saints

Saints should have all their ability for every step they take in the way to heaven, will soon appear.

First, This way of communicating strength to Saints gives a double accent to Gods love and mercy.

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First, It distils a sweetnesse into all the believer hath or doth, when he findes any comfort in his bosome, any enlargement of heart in duty, any support under temptations: To consider whence came all these, what friend sends them in? they come not from my owne ciste-ne, or any creatures? O'tis my God that hath been here, and left his sweet perfume of comfort behinde him in my bosome, my God, that hath (unawares to me) fill'd my failes with the gales of his Spirit, and brought me off the flats of my owne deadnesse, where I lay a ground. O'tis his sweet Spirit: that held my head, stay'd my heart in such an affliction and temptation, or else I had gone away in a fainting fit of unbelief. How can this choo'e but enleas'n God to a gracious soul? his succours coming so immediately from heaven, which would be lost, if the Christian had any strength to help himself. (though this stock of strength came at first from God) Which, think you, speaks more love and condescend: for a Prince to give a Pension to a Favourite, on which he may live by his own care, or for this Prince to take the chief care upon himself, and come from day to day to this mans house, and look into his Cupboard, and see what provision he hath, what expence he is at, and so constantly to provide for the man from time to time? Possibly some proud spirit that likes to be his own man, or loves his means better than his Prince, would prefer the former, but one that is ambitious to have the heart and love of his Prince, would be ravish'd with the latter. Thus God doth with his Saints, the great God comes and looks into their Cupboard, and sees how they are laid in, and sends in accordingly, as he findes them. *Your heavenl Father knows you have need of these things,* and you shall have them. He knows you need strength to pray, hears, suffer for him, and *in ipsa b'ra dabitur*.

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Secondly, this way of Gods dealing with his Saints, addes to the fullnesse and stability of their strength. Were the stock in our own hands, we should soone prove broken Merchants. God knows we are but leaking vessels, when fullest, we could not hold it long; and therefore to make all sure, he sets us under the

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streamings forth of his strength, and a leaking vessel under a cock gets what it loseth. Thus we have our leakage supplied continually. This was the provision God made for Israel in the wilderness; *He clave the rock, and the rock followed them.* They had not only a draught at present, but it ran in a stream after them; so that you hear no more of their complaints for water; *This rock was Christ.* Every believer hath Christ at his back, following him with strength as he goes, for every condition and trial. One flower with the root is worth many in a posse, which though sweet yet do not grow, but wither as we wear them in our bosomes. God's strength, as the root keeps our grace lively, without which though as orient as *Adam's* was, it would die.

2. The second design God hath in his Saints happiness is, that he may so expresse his mercy and love to them, as may rebound back to him in the highest advance of his own glory therein, *Eph. 1. 4, 12.* which is fully attained in this way of empowering Saints, by a strength not of their own, but of their God his sending, as they are put to expence. Had God given his Saints a stock of grace to have set up with and left them to the improvement of it, he had been *magnified* indeed, because it was more then God did owe the creature, but he had not been *omnified* as now, when not only the Christians first strength to close with Christ is from God, but he is beholden still to God for the exercise of that strength, in every action of his Christian course. As a child that travels in his fathers company, all is paid for, but his father carries the purse, not himselfe: so the Christians shot is discharged in every condition; but he cannot say this I did, or that I suffered, but God wrought all in me and for me. The very combe of pride is cuthe, no room for any selfe exalting thoughts. The Christian cannot say, that I am a Saint by mercy, but being a Saint that my faith is strong, this is the child of my own care and watchfulness. Alas, poor Christian! who kept thine eye waking, and stirr'd up thy care? was not this the off-spring of God as well as thy faith at first? No Saint shall say of Heaven when he comes there, This is Heaven which I have built by the power of my might. No, *Jerusalem above is a City, whose builder and maker is God,* Every grace, yea, degree of grace is a stone in that building, the topstone whereof is laid

Be strong in the Lord.

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laid in glory, where Saints shall more plainly see, how God was not only Founder to begin, but Benefactor also to finish the same. The glory of the work shall not be crumbled, and piece-meal'd out, some to God, and some to the creature; but all entred paid in to God, and he acknowledged all in all.

SECTION. 2.

Is the Christians strength in the Lord, not in himself, Surely then the Christlesse person must needs be a poor impotent creature, void of all strength and ability of doing any thing of it self towards its own salvations. If the ship launch't, rigg'd and with her sails spread cannot stir, till the winde come faire and fills them, much lesse can the timber that lies in the Carpenters yard, hew and frame it self into a ship. If the living tree cannot grow, except the root communicate its sap, much lesse can a dead rotten stake in the hedge, which hath no root, live of its owne accord. In a word, if a Christian, that hath this spiritual life of grace, cannot exercise this life, without strength from above; then surely, one void of this new life, dead in sins and trespasses, can never be able to beget this in himselfe, or concur to the production of it. The state of unregeneracy is a state of impotency, *When we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly*, Rom. 5. 6. And as Christ found the lump of mankind covered with the ruines of their lapsed estate, (no more able to raise themselves from under the weight of Gods wrath which lay upon them, then one buried under the rubbish of a fallen house, is to free himselfe of that weight without help) so the Spirit findes sinners in as helpless a condition, as unable to repent, or believe on Christ for salvation, as they were of themselves to purchase it. *Confounded therefore for ever be the language of those sons of pride, who cry up the power of nature, as if man with his own brick and lime of natural abilities were able to reare up such a building, whose top may reach heaven it selfe. It is not of him that willeth or runneth; but* Rom. 9. 16. *God that sheweth mercy.* God himself hath scattered such **Babel-**

builders in the imagination of their hearts, who raiseth this spiritual Temple in the soules of men, not by might, nor by a power of their own, but by his Spirit, that so grace, grace, might be proclaimed before it for ever. And therefore if any yet in their natural estate would become wise to salvation, let them first become fooles in their own eyes, and renounce their carnal wisdom, which perceives not the things of God, and beg wisdom of God, who giveth and upbraideth not. If any man would have strength to believe, let them become weake, and die to their own, for by strength shall no man prevaile, 1 Sam. 2.9.

Use 2.

Secondly, doth the Christians strength lie in God, not in himselfe? this may for ever keep the Christian humble, when most enlarged in duty, most assisted in his Christian course. Remember, Christian, when thou hast thy best suit on, who made it, who paid for it: Thy grace, thy comfort is neither the work of thy own hands, nor the price of thy own desert, be not for shame proud of anothers cost. That assistance will not long stay, which becomes a nurse to thy pride; thou art not Lord of that assistance thou hast. Thy Father is wise, who when he alloweth thee most for thy spiritual maintenance, even then keeps the Law in his own hands, and can soon curb thee, if thou growest wanton with his grace. Walk humbly therefore before thy God, and husband well that strength thou hast, remembering that it is borrowed strength. *Nemo prodiget quod mendicat.* Who will wast what he begs? or who will give that beggar that spends idly his almes? when thou hast most thou canst not be long from thy God his door. Ah! how canst thou look him on the face for more, who hast imbezeld what thou hast received?

CHAP. III.

Of acting our faith on the Almighty Power of God.

The third Branch followeth, which contains an encouraging Amplification annexed to the exhortation in these words; *And in the Power of his might*, where a two fold enquiry is requisite for the explication of the phrase. First, what these words import, *The Power of his might*? Secondly, what it is to *be strong in the Power of his might*?

For the first, the Power of his might: It is an Hebraisme, & imports nothing but his mighty Power; like that phrase, *Eph 1.6. To the praise of the glory of his grace*, that is, to the praise of his glorious grace. And his mighty Power imports no lesse then his Almighty Power; sometimes the Lord is stiled *mighty and strong*, as *Pf. 24.8.* sometimes *most mighty*, sometimes *Almighty*, no lesse is meant in all, then Gods infinite Almighty Power.

For the second to be strong in the mighty Power, or Power of the Lord's might, implies these two acts of faith.

First, a settled firme perswasion, that the Lord is Almighty in Power. *Be strong in the Power of his might*, that is, be strongly rooted in your faith, concerning this one foundation truth, that God is Almighty.

Secondly, it implies a further act of faith, not only to believe, that God is Almighty, but also that this Almighty Power of God is engaged for its defence: so as to bear up in the midst of all trials and temptations undauntedly, leaning on the arm of God Almighty, as if it were his own strength; for that is the apostles drift, as to beat us off from leaning on our owne strength, so to encourage the Christian to make use of Gods Almighty Power, as freely as if it were his own; when ever assaulted by Satan in any kinde. As a man set upon by a thief, stirs up all the force and strength he hath in his whole body to de-

defend himselfe and offend his adversary, so the Apostle bids the Christian *be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might*, that is, Soule, away to thy God, whose mighty Power is all intended and devoted by God himselfe for thy succour and defence. Go strengthen and entrench thy selfe in it by a steadfast faith, as that which shall be laid out to the utmost for thy good. From whence these two notes, I conceive, will draw out the fatnesse of the words.

1. That it should be the Christians great care and endeavour in all temptations and trials, to strengthen his faith on the Almighty Power of God.

2. The Christians duty and care is not only to believe that God is Almighty, but strongly by faith to rest on this Almighty power of God, as engaged for his help and succour in all his trials and temptations

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First it should be the Christians great care in all temptations and trials, to strengthen his faith on the Almighty Power of God. When God holds forth himselfe as an object of the soules trust and confidence in any great strait or undertaking; commonly this attribute of his Almighty power is presented in the promise, as the surest hold-fast for faith to lay hold on; as a Father in rugged way, gives his childe his *arme* to lay hold by, so doth God usually reach forth his Almightie power for his Saints, to exercise their faith on. *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, whose faith God tried above most of his Saints before or since, for not one of those great things which were promised to them, did they live to see performed in their dayes: and how doth God make known himselfe to them for their support, but by displaying this Attribute? *Exod. 6. 3. I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the Name of God Almighty.* This was all they had to keep house with all their dayes: with which they lived comfortably, and died triumphantly, bequeathing the promise to their children, not doubting (because God Almighty had promised) of the performance. Thus, *Isa. 26.* where great mercies are promised to *Judah*, and a Song penned before-hand to be sung on that gaudie day of their salvation: yet because there was a sharp Winter of Captivity to come between the Promise, and the Spring-time of the promise; therefore to keep their faith alive in this space, the Prophet calls them up to act their

their faith on God Almighty, *v. 4. Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.* So when his Saints are going into the furnace of persecution, what now doth he direct their faith to carry to prison, to stake with them but this Almighty power? *1. Pet. 4. 19. Let them that suffer, commit the keeping of their souls to him, as to a faithful Creatour.* Creatour is a name of Almighty Power, we shall now give some Reasons of the Point.

First, because it is no easie work to make use of this truth, (how plain and clear soever it now appears,) in great plunges of temptation, that God is Almighty; To vindicate this Name of God from those evil reports, which Satan and carnal Reason raise against it, requires a strong faith indeed. I confesse this principle is a piece of natural divinity; That light which finds out a Deity, will evince (if followed close) this God to be Almighty; yet in a carnal heart, it is like a rusty sword, hardly drawne out of the scabbard, and so of little or no use. Such truths are so imprisoned in natural conscience, that they seldom get a fair hearing in the sinners bosome, till God gives them a Goal-delivery, and brings them out of their house of bondage, where they are shut up in unrighteousnesse with a high hand of his convincing Spirit. Then and not till then the soule will believe God is holy, mercifull, Almighty; nay, some of Gods peculiar people, and not the meanest for grace amongst them, have had their faith for a time set in this slough, much ado to get over those difficulties and improbabilities, which sense and Reason have objected, so as to relie on the Almighty Power of God, with a notwithstanding. Moses himselfe, a starre of the first magnitude for grace, yet see how his faith blinks and twinkles, till he wades out the temptation, *Numb. 11. 21. The people among whom I am, are six hundred thousand, and thou hast said, I will give them flesh that they may eat a whole month, shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them?* This holy man had lost the sight for a time of the Almighty Power of God, and now he is projecting how this should be done; as if he had said in plain termes, How can this be accomplished? for so God interprets his reasoning, *v. 23, And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lords hand waxed short;* So Mary, *John 11. 32. Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* And her Sister

Reason 1.

Martha, v. 39. Lord by this time he stinketh. Both gracious women, yet both betrayed the weaknesse of their faith on the Almighty Power of Christ, one limiting him to place; *If thou hadst been here he had not died;* as if Christ could not have saved his life absent as well as present, sent his health to him as well as brought it with him. The other to time, *Now he stinketh.* As if Christ had brought his Physick too late, and the grave would not deliver up its prisoner at Christs command; and hast thou such an high opinion of thy self, Christian, that thy faith needs not thy utmost care and endeavour for further establishment on the Almighty Power of God, when thou feelest such as the eddies dash their foot against this kinde of temptation?

The second Reason may be taken from the absolute necessity of this act of faith above others, to support the Christian in the house of temptation. All the Christians strength and comfort is fetched without doors, and he hath none to send of his errand but faith; This goes to heaven and knocks God up, as he in the parable his neighbour at midnight for bread: Therefore when faith failes, and the soul hath none to go to market for supplies, there must needs be a poor house kept in the meantime. Now faith is never quite laid up, till the soule denies, or at least questions the Power of God. Indeed, when the Christian disputes the will of God, whispering within its owne bosome, will he pardon? will he save? this may make faith go haltingly to the throne of grace, but not knock the soule off from seeking the face of God: even then faith on the Power of God, will tear it company thither: *If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;* if thou wilt, thou canst pardon, thou canst purge: But when the soul concludes he cannot pardon, cannot save, this shoots faith to the heart, so that the soule falls at the foot of Satan, not able more to resist. Now it grows listlesse to duty, indifferent whether it pray or not, as one that sees the Well dry, breaks or throwes away his Pitcher.

3. Thirdly because God is very tender of this flower of his Crown, this part of his Name: Indeed we cannot spell it right and leave out this letter; for that is Gods Name, whereby he is known from all his creatures. Now man may be called wise, mercifull, mighty: God only all-wise, all-mercifull, Almighty; so that when we leave out this syllable All, we nick-name God, and

and call him by his creatures name, which he will not answer to. Now the tendernesse that God shews to this Prerogative of his, appears in three particulars.

First, in the strict command he layes on his people, to give him the glory of his power, *Isa. 8. 12, 13. Fear yee not their fear, but sanctifie the Lord of hostes himself:* that is, in this sad posture of your affaires, when your enemies associate, and you seem a lost people to the eye of Reason, not able to contest with such united Powers, which beset you on every side: Now I charge you sanctifie me in giving me the glory of my almighty Power; believe that your God is able of himselfe, without any other, to defend you, and destroy them.

1.

Secondly, in his severity to his dearest children, when they stagger in their faith, and come not off roundly (without reasoning and disputing the case) to relie on his Almighty Power: *Zacharias* did but ask the Angel, *How shall I know this, because I am an old man, and my wife stricken in yeares;* yet for bewraying therein his unbelief, had a signe indeed given him, but such a one as did not only strengthen his faith, but severely punish his unbelief, for he was struck dumb upon the place. God loves his children should believe his Word, not dispute his power; so true is that of *Lutter*, *Deus amat curristas non queristas.* That which gave accent to *Abrahams* faith, *Rom. 4. 21.* was that he was fully perswaded, that what God had promised, he was able to performe.

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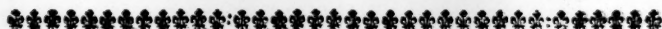
Thirdly, in the way God takes of giving his choicest mercies, and greatest salvations to his people, wherein he layes the scene of his Providence so, that when he hath done, it may be said Almighty Power was here. And therefore God commonly puts down those meanes and second causes, which if they stood about his work, would blind and hinder the full prospect thereof in effecting the same, *2 Cor. 1. 9. We received the sentence of death in our selves, that we might not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead.* Christ stayed while *Lazarus* was dead, that he might draw the eyes of their faith more singly to look on his power, by raising his dead friend, rather then curing him being sick, which would not have carried so full a conviction of Almightynesse with it. Yea, he suffers a contrary power many times to arise in that very juncture of time, when he intends the

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mercy to his people, that he may rear up the more magnificent pillar of remembrance to his owne power, in the ruine of that which contests with him. Had God brought Israel out of Egypt in the time of those Kings which knew Joseph, most likely they might have had a friendly departure and an easie deliverance, but God reserves this for the reigne of that proud Pharaoh, who shall cruelly oppresse them, and venture his Kingdom, but he *will satisfie his lust upon them*. And why must this be the time? but that God would bring them forth with a stretched-out arme: The magnifying of his power was Gods great designe, *Exod. 9. 16 In very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, to shew in thee my power, and that my Name may be declared throughout the earth.*

4. Fourthly, in the prevalency which an argument that is pressed from his Almighty Power hath with God. It was the last string Moses had to his bowe, when he begg'd the life of Israel, *Numb. 14. 16. The nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, because the Lord was not able, &c.* And, *v. 17. Let the Power of my Lord be great;* And with this he hath their pardon thrown him.

The Application of this Point will fall in under the next, which is.



CHAP. IV.

Of acting our faith on the Almighty Power of God, as engaged for our help.

Do8. **T**HAT is is the Saints duty, and, should be their care, not only to believe God Almighty, but also strongly to believe that this almighty Power of God is theirs, (that is, engaged for their defence and help), so as to make use of it in all straits and temptations.

SECT. I.

First, I shall prove that the Almighty Power of God is engaged for the Christians defence, with the grounds of it. Secondly, why the Christian shou'd strongly act his faith on this.

First, the Almighty Power of God is engaged for the Saints defence; God brought Israel out of Egypt with an high hand, but did he set them downe on the other side the Red-sea to finde and force their way to Canaan, by their owne policie or power? When he had opened the iron gate of their house of bondage, and brought them into the opened fields, did he vanish as the Angel from Peter, when out of prison? No, as a man carries his son, so the Lord bare them in all the way they went, *Deut. 1. 31.* This doth lively set forth the Saints march to heaven: God brings a soule out of spirituall Egypt by his converting grace, that is, the *day of his power*, wherein he makes the soule willing to come out of Satans clutches. Now when the Saint is upon his march, all the country riseth upon him. How shall this poore creature passe the pikes, and get safely by all his enemies borders? God himselfe infolds him in the arme of his everlasting strength. *We are kept by the Power of God through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5.* The power of God is that *shoulder*, on which Christ carries his *sheep* home, rejoycing all the way he goes, *Luke 15. 5.* These everlasting armes of his strength are those *Eagles wings*, upon which the Saints are both tenderly and securely conveye to glory, *Exod. 19. 4.* There is a five fold tie or engagement that lies upon Gods power, to be the Saints life-guard.

First, the neare relation he hath to his Saints, they are his own dear children, every one takes care of his own, the silly Hen, how doth she busle and bestir her self to gather her brood under her wing when the Kite appeares? No care like that which Nature teacheth. How much more will God, who is the Father of such dispositions in his creature, stir up his whole strength to defend his children? *He said, They are my people, so he became their Saviour, Isa. 33. 8.* As if God had said, shall I sit still with my hand in my bosome, while my own people are thus misused be-

fore my face : I cannot beare it. The Mother as she sits in her house heares one shriek, and knows the voice, cries out, O tis my childe, away she throws all, and runs to him. Thus God takes the alarm of his childrens cry; *I heard Ephraim bemoaning himselfe*, saith the Lord, his cry pierced his eare, and his eare affected his bowels: and his bowels call'd up his power to the rescue of him.

2. Secondly, the deare love he beareth to his Saints engageth his power. He that hath Gods heart, cannot want his arme. Love in the creature commands all the other affections, sets all the powers of the whole man on work; thus in God, love sets all his other attributes on work, when God once pitch't his thoughts of doing good to lost man, then wisdom fell on projecting the way, Almighty power that undertook to raise the fabrick according to wisdomes modell. All are ready to effect what God saith he likes. Now the believing soule is an object of Gods choicest love, even the same, with which he loves his Son, *John 17 26.*

3. First, God loves the believer as the birth of his everlasting counsell, when a soul believes, then Gods eternal purpose and counsell concerning him, (whom he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, and with whom his thoughts went so long big) brings forth. And how must God needs love that creature, whom he carried so long in the wombe of his eternal purpose? This goodly Fabrick of heaven and earth had not been built, but as a stage whereon he would in time act what he decreed in heaven of old, concerning the saving of thee, and a few more his Elect; and therefore according to the same rate of delight, with which God pleased and entertained himself in the thoughts of this before the world was, must he needs rejoyce over the soule now believing, with love and complacency unconceivable; and God having brought his counsell thus far towards its issue, surely will raise all the power he hath, rather than be disappointed of his glory, within a few steps of home; I mean, his whole design in the believers salvation; The Lord who hath chosen his Saints, (as Christ prays for *Joshua* their representative will rebuke Satan and all their enemies.

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2. Secondly, God loves his Saints as the purchase of his Sons blood; they cost him dear, and that which is so hardly got shall
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not be easily lost. He that was willing to expend his Sons blood to gain them, will not deny his power to keep them.

Thirdly, God loves the Saints for their likeness to himself, so that if he loves himself, he cannot but love himself appearing in them; and as he loves himself in them, so he defends himself in defending them. What is it in a Saint that enrageth hell, but the image of God, without which the war would soon be at an end? It is the hatred the Panther hath to man that makes him fly at his picture; *For thy sake we are slain all the day long*: and if the quarrel be Gods, surely the Saint shall not go forth to war at his own cost.

Thirdly, The Covenant engageth Gods Almighty power, *Gen. 17. 1. I am the Almighty God, walk before me.* There is a League offensive and defensive between God and his Saints; he gives it under his hand, that he will put forth the whole power of his Godhead for them, *1 Chron. 17. 24. The Lord of Hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel.* God doth not parcel himself out by retails, but gives his Saints leave to challenge whatever a God hath as theirs, and let him woe ever he is, sit in Gods throne, and take away his crown, that can fasten any untruth on the Holy One; as his Name is, so is his Nature, a God keeping Covenant for ever. The Promises stand as the mountains about Jerusalem, never to be removed: the weak as well as the strong Christian is within this Line of Communication. Were Saints to fight it out in open field by the strength of their own grace, then the strong were more likely to stand, and the weak to fall in battell, but both called in the Covenant are alike safe.

Fourthly, the Saints dependance on God, and expression from God in all their straits, oblige his power for their succour; whether doth a gracious soul fly in any want or danger from sin, Satan, or his instruments, but to his God as naturally as the Coney to her Burrough: *Psal. 57. 3. At what time I am afraid, saith David, I will trust in thee*: He tells God he will make bold of his house to step into, when taken in any storm; and doth not question his welcome. Thus when Saul hunted him, he left a city of gates and barrs to trust God in open field. Indeed all the Saints are taught the same lesson, to renounce their own strength, and rely on the Power of God, their own policy

police, & cast themselves on the wisdom of God; their own righteousness; and expect all from the pure mercy of God in Christ which act of faith is so pleasing to God, that such a soule shall never be ashamed, *Psalm 9. 18. The expectation of the poor shall not perish.* A Heathen could say, when a bird (scared by a Hawke) flew into his bo'some, I will not betray thee unto thy enemy, seeing thou comest for Sanctuary unto me. How much lesse will God yield up a soule unto its enemy, when it takes Sanctuary in his Name, saying, Lord, I am hunted with such a temptation, dogg'd with such a lust, either thou must pardon it, or I am damned; mortifie it, or I shall be a slave to it; take me into the bo'some of thy love for Christs sake; castle me in the armes of thy everlasting strength, it is in thy power to save me from, or give me up into the hands of my enemy: I have no confidence in myself or any other: into thy hands I commit my cause, my life, and relye on thee; This dependance of a soule undoubtedly will awaken the Almighty Power of God, for such a ones defence: he hath sworn the greatest oath that can come out of his blessed lips, even by himself, that such as thus flie *for refuge to hope* in him shall have *strong consolation*, *Heb. 6. 17.* This indeed may give the Saints the greater boldnesse of faith to expect kindly entertainment, when he repairs to God for refuge, because he cannot come before he is look't for, God having set up his Name and Promises as a strong Tower, both calls his people into these Chambers, and expects they should betake themselves thither.

6. Sixthly, Christs presence and employment in heaven layes a strong engagement on God to bring his whole force and power into the field upon all occasions for his Saints defence; one special end of his journey to heaven, and abode there is, that he might (as the Saints Solicitor) be ever interceding for such supplies and succours of his Father, as their exigencies call for; and the more to assure us of the same before he went, he did (as it were) tell us, what heads he meant to go upon in his intercession, when he should come there; one of which was this, that his Father should keep his children while they were to stay in the world, from the evill thereof, *John 17. 15.* Neither doth Christ take upon him this work of his own head, but hath the same appointment of his Father, for what he now prays in
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heaven, as he had for what he suffered on earth : He that ordained him a Priest to die for sinners, did not then strip him of his Priestly garments (as *Aaron*,) but appoints him to ascend in them to heaven, where he sits a Priest for ever by Gods Oath. And this office of intercession, was erected purely in mercy to believers, that they might have full content given them for the performance of all that God had promised ; so that Jesus Christ lies Lieger at Court as our Embassador, to see all carried fairly between God and us according to agreement : And if Christ follows his business close, and be faithfull in his place to believers, all is well ; and doth it not behove him to be so, who intercedes for such dear relations ? Suppose a Kings Son should get out of a besieged City, where he hath left his wife and children, (whom he loves as his owne soule,) and these all ready to die by sword or famine, if supply come not the sooner, could this Prince, when arrived at his fathers house please himself with the delights of the Court, and forget the distresse of his family ? or rather would he not come post to his father, (having their cries and groanes alwayes in his eares) and before he eat or drink, do his errand to his father, and entreat him if ever he lov'd him, that he would send all the force of his Kingdom to raise the siege, rather then any of his dear relations should perish ? Surely (Sirs) though Christ be in the top of his preferment, and out of the storme in regard of his own person, yet his children left behind in the midst of sins, Satan, and the worlds batteries are in his heart, and shall not be forgotten a moment by him. The care he takes in our business appeared in the speedy dispatch he made of his Spirit to his Apostles supply, when he ascended, which as soon almost as he was warm in his seat, at his Fathers right hand, he sent, to the incomparable comfort of his Apostles and us, that to this day, yea, to the end of the world do, or shall believe on him.

SECT. 2

The second Branch of the point followes : that Saints should eye this Power of God as engaged for them, and presse it
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home upon their soules till they silence all doubt and feares about the matter; which is the importance of this exhortation: *Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might*; Fortifie and entrench your soules within the breast-work of this attribute of Gods mighty Power made over to you by God himselfe.

- First, it is the end as of all Promises to be security to our faith, so of those in particular where his Almighty Power is expressly engaged, that we may count this attribute our portion, and reap the comfort it yields as freely, as one may the crop of his own field: *Walk before me*, saith God to Abraham, *I am God Almighty*; set on this as thy portion, and live upon it; The Apostle, *Heb 13. 6.* teacheth us what use to make of promises, *verse 5. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, there is the promise, and the inference, which he teacheth us to draw by faith from this, follows, *verse 6. So we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper.* We, that is, every believer may boldly say, that is, we may conclude God will help: not sneakingly, timorously, perhaps he will; but we may boldly assert it in the face of men and devils, because he that is Almighty hath said it. Now for a Christian not to strengthen his faith on this incomparably sweet attribute, but to sit down with a few weak unsettled hopes, when he may, yea, ought to be strong in the faith of such promises, what is it but to undervalue the Blessing of such promises? as if one should promise another house and land, and bid him make them as sure to himselfe as the Law can binde, and he should take no care to effect this: would it not be interpreted as a sleighting of his friends kindnesse? Is it a small matter that God passeth over his Almighty power by promise tous, and bids us make it as sure to our selves as we can by faith, and we neglect this, leaving the Writings of the promises unsealed on our hearts.

- Secondly, our obedience and comfort are strong or weak as our faith is on this principle.

- First our obedience, that being a child of faith partakes of its Parents strength or weaknesse; Abraham being strong in faith, what an heroick act of obedience did he perform in offering up his Son? his faith being well set on the power of God, he carries that without staggering, which would have laid a weak faith on the ground. No act of faith more strengthens for

for duty, then that which eyes Gods Almighty power engaged for its assistance, *Go in this thy might*, said God to *Gedion*, have no! I call'd thee? as if he had said, Can I not, will I not carry thee through thy work? Away goes *Gideon* in the faith of this and doth wonders. This brought the righteous man from the East to Gods foot, though he knew not whether he went, yet he knew with whom he went, God Almighty. But take a soul not perswaded of this how uneven and unsafe is he in his obediencial course? every threat from man if mighty dismayes him, because his faith not fixt on the Almighty, and therefore for times he will shift off a duty to comply with man, and betray his trust into the hands of a sorry creature, because he hath fleshly eyes to behold the power of man, but wants a spiri-²tual eye to see God at his back, to protect him with his Almighty power; which were his eyes open to see, he would not be so routed in his thoughts at the approach of a weak creature: *Should such a man as I flee?* said good *Nebemiah*, *Nebem. 6. 11.* He was newly come from the throne of grace, where he had called in the help of the Almighty, *verse 9. O God, strengthen my hands.* And truly now he will rather die upon the place, then disparage his God with a dishonourable retreat.

Secondly, the Christians comfort increaseth or waines, as the aspect of his faith is to the power of God. Let the soule question that or his interest in it, and his joy gusheth out, even as blood out of a broken vein: It is true, a soule may scramble to heaven with much ado, by a faith of recumbency, relying on God as able to save, without this perswasion of its interest in God; but such a soule goes with a scant side-winde, or like a ship whose masts are laid by the board, exposed to winde and weather, if others better appointed did not tow it along with them. Many feares like waves ever and anon cover such a soule, that it is more under water then above; whereas one that sees it selfe folded in the armes of Almighty power, O how such a soule goes mounting afore the winde, with her sailes fill'd with joy and peace! Let affliction come, stormes arise, this blessed soule knowes where it shall land and be welcome. The Name of God is his harbour, where he puts in as boldly, as a man steps into his own house, when taken in a shower. He heares God calling him into this and other his attributes, as

Chambers taken up for him, Isa. 26. Come my people, enter into thy Chambers. God calls them his, and it were foolish modesty not to own what God gives, Isa. 45. 24. Surely shall a man say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, that is, I have righteousness in Gods righteousness, strength in his strength, so that in this respect Christ can no more say that his strength is his owne, and not the believers, then the husband can say my body is my own, and not my wives. A soule perswaded of this may sing merrily with the sharpest thorne at its breast; so David, Psal. 57. 7. My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise. What makes him so merry in so a place as the Cave where now he was? he will tell you, verse 1 where you have him nestling himselfe under the shadow of Gods wings, and now well may he sing care and feare away. A soule thus provided, may lie at ease on a hard bed. Do you not think they sleep as soundly who dwell on London-bridge as they who live at White-hall or Cheap-side, knowing the waves that roare under them cannot hurt them? Even so may the Saints rest quietly over the floods of death it selfe, and feare no ill.

SECT. 3.

Use 1.

Is the Almighty power of God engaged for the Saints defence? surely then they will have a hard pull, (the Saints enemies I mean) who meddle with them that are so far above their match. The devil was so cunning, he would have *Joh* out of his trench, his hedge down, before he would fall on; but so desperate are men, they will try the field with the Saints, though incircled wth the Almighty power of God. What folly were it to attempt or sit down before such a City, which cannot be blockt up so as no relief can get in: the way to heaven cannot. In the Churches straitest siege, *there is a river which shall make glad this City of God*, with seasonable succours from heaven. The Saints fresh-springs are all from God, and it is as feasible for sorry man to stop the water-courses of the clouds, as to dam up those streames, which invisibly glide like veins of water in the earth, from

from the fountain head of his mercy into the bosome of his people: the Egyptians thought they had Israel in a trap, when they saw them march into such a nook by the sea-side; *They are entangled, they are entangled*; and truly so they had been irrecoverably, had not that Almighty power which led them on, engaged to bring them off with honour and safety; well, when they are out of this danger; behold, they are in a wilderness, where nothing is to be had for back and belly, and yet here they shall live forty yeares, without trade or tillage, without begging or robbing of any of the Neighbour-nations, they shall not be beholden to them for a penny in their way; what cannot Almighty power do to provide for his people? what can it not do to protect them against the power and wrath of their enemies? Almighty power stood between the Israelite and the Egyptians, so that (poor creatures) they could not so much as come to see their enemies: God sets up a dark cloud as a blinde before their eyes, and all the while, his eye through the cloud is looking them into disorder and confusion; And is the Almighty grown weaker now a dayes, or his enemies stronger, that they promise themselves better successe? No, neither, but men are blinder then the Saints enemies of old, who sometimes have fled at the appearances of God among his people, crying out, *Let us flee, for the Lord fighteth for them.* Whereas there be many now a dayes will rather give the honour of their discomfitures to Satan himself, then acknowledge God in the businesse; more ready to say the devil fought against them, then God? O you that have not yet worne off the impressions which the almighty power of God hath at any time made upon your spirits, be ware of having anything to do with this generation of men, whoever they are. Come not near their *Tabernacle*, cast not thy lot in amongst them, who are enemies to the Saints of the most High, for they are men devoted to destruction. God so loves his Saints, that he makes nothing to give *whole Nations for their ransom.* He rip't open the very wombe of Egypt, to save the life of Israel his childe, *Ira. 43. 3.*

Secondly, this shewes the dismal, deplorable condition of all you, who are yet in a Christlesse state, you have seen a rich mine open'd, but not a peny of this treasure comes to your share, a truth laden with incomparable comfort, but it is bound

Use 2.

for another coast, it belongs to the Saints into whose bosome this truth unlades all her comfort: see God shutting the door upon you, when he sets his children to feast themselves with such dainties, *Esay 65. 13. My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty.* God hath his set number, which he provides for; He knows how many he hath in his family: these and no more shall sit down. One chief dish at the Saints board is the Almighty power of God; This was set before *Abraham*, and stands before all his Saints, that they may eate to fulnesse of comfort on it; *but thou shalt be hungry*; He is Almighty to Pardon, but he will not use it for thee an impenitent sinner; thou hast not a friend on the bench, not an attribute in all Gods Name will speak for thee: Mercy it selfe will sit and vote with the rest of its fellow-attributes for thy damnation. God is able to save and help in a time of need, but upon what acquaintance is it that thou art so bold with God, as to expect his saving arme to be stretcht forth for thee? Though a man will rise at midnight to let in a child, that cries and knocks at his doore, yet he will not take so much paines for a dog, that lies howling there. This presents thy condition, sinner, said enough, yet this is to tell thy story fairest; for that Almighty power of God which is engaged for the beleevers salvation, is as deeply obliged to bring thee to thy execution, and damnation. What greater tie then an oath? God himself is under an oath to be the destruction of every impenitent soul. That oath which God sware in his wrath against the unbelieving *Israelites*, that they should not enter into his rest, concernes every unbeliever to the end of the world. In the Name of God consider, were it but the oath of a man, or a company of men, that like those in the *Acts*, should sweare to be the death of such a one, and thou wert the man, would it not fill thee with feare and trembling night and day, and take away the quiet of thy life, till they were made friends? What then are their pillows stuf with, who can sleep so soundly without any horrour or amazement, though they be told, that the Almighty God is under an oath of damning them body and soul, without timely repentance? O bethink your selves, sinners, is it wisdom, or valour to refuse termes of mercy from Gods hands, whose Almighty power if rejected, will soone bring you into

into the hands of justice? and how *terrible a thing* that is, to fall in the hands of Almighty God, no tongue can expresse, no not they who feel the weight of it.

Thirdly, this speaks to you, that are Saints indeed, Be strong Use 3. in the faith of this truth, make it an Article of your Creed: with the same faith that you believe there is a God, believe also this Gods Almighty power is thy sure friend, and then improve it to thy best and advantage. As,

First, in agonies of conscience that arise from the greatnesse of thy sinns, fly for refuge into the Almighty power of God. Truly Sirs, when a mans finnes are displayed in all their bloody colours, and spread forth in their killing aggravations, and the eye of conscience awakened to behold them through the multiplying, or magnifying glasse of a temptation, they must needs surprize the creature with horror and amazement; till the soul can say with the Prophet: for all this huge host, *There is yet more with me then against me.* One Almighty is more then many Mighties. All these mighty finnes and devils make not one Almighty sinne, or an Almighty devil. Oppose to all the hideous charges brought against thee by them this onely attribute. As the French Ambassadour once silenced the Spaniards ride in repeating his Master many titles, with one that drowned them all. God himself, *Hosea 11.9.* when he had aggravated his peoples sinnes to the height, then to shew what a God can do, breaks out into a sweet promise: *I will not execute the fiercenesse of mine anger,* and why not? *I am God, and not man.* I will shew the Almightynesse of my mercy. Something like our usual phrase; when a childe or a woman strikes us, I am a man, and not a childe, or woman, therefore I will not strike again. The very considering God to be God, supposeth him Almighty to pardon as well as to avenge, and this is some relief; But then to consider it is Almighty power in bond and Covenant to pardon, this is more; As none can binde God but himself, so none can break the bond himself makes: and are they not his own words, that *he will abundantly pardon?* Isa. 55. He will multiply to pardon, as if he had said, I'll drop mercy with your sinne, and spend all I have, rather then let it be said my good is overcome of your evil. It fares with the gracious soul in this case as, with a Captaine, that yields his

his Castle upon gracious termes of having his life spared and his safely convey'd to his house, there to be settled peaceably in his estate and possessions, for all which he hath the Generals hand and Seal, on which he marcheth forth; but the rude fouldiers assault him, and put him in feare of his life, he appeales to the General, (whose honour now is engaged for him) and is presently relieved, and his enemies punisht: Thou mayest poore soule, when accused by Sathan, molested by his terrours, say, *It is God that justifies*; I have his hand to it, that I should have my life given me as soon as I laid down my armes and submitted to him, which I desire to do; behold, the gates of my heart are open to let the Prince of peace in, and is not the Almighty able to perform his promise? I commit my self to him as unto a faithfull Creator.

- e. Secondly, improve thy Almighty power of God, and thy interest therein, in temptations to sin, when thou art over-powered, and flyest before the face of thy strong corruption, or fearest thou shalt one day fall by it, make bold to take hold of this attribute, and re-inforce thy self from it again to resist, and in resisting, to believe a timely victory over it. The Almighty God stands in sight of thee while thou art in the valley fighting, and staves but for a call from thee when distressed in battel, and then he will come to thy rescue: *Jehoshaphat* cried, when in the throng of his enemies, and the Lord helped him, much more mayest thou promise thy self his succour in thy soul-combates: Betake thy self to the throne of grace with that promise; *Sin shall not have dominion over you*: and before thou urgest it (the more to help thy faith,) comfort thy self with this, that though this word Almighty is not exprest, yet it is implied in this and every promise, and thou mayest without adding a title to the Word of God read it in thy soul; sin shall not have dominion over you, saith the Almighty God, for this and all his attributes are the constant seale to all his promises. Now soule put the bond in suit, fear not the recovery, 'tis debt, and so due: He is able whom thou suest, and so there is no feare of losing the charge of the suit, and he that was so gracious to binde himself when he was free, will be so faithful (being able) to perform now he is bound: only while thou expectest the performance of the promise, and the assistance of this Almighty power against thy
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corruptions, take heed that thou keep under the shadow of this attribute, and condition of this promise. The shadow will not cool except in it; what good to have the shadow, though of a mighty rock, when we sit in the open Sun? To have Almighty power engaged for us, and we to throw our selves out of the protection thereof, ly bold salleyes into the mouth of temptation? The Saints falls have been, when they run out of their trench and hold; for like the conies, they are a weak people in themselves, and their strength lies in the rook of Gods Almightyneffe, which is their habitation.

Thirdly, Christian, improve this, when opprest with the weight of any duty and service, which in thy place and calling lies upon thee. Perhaps thou findest thy duty of thy calling too heavy for thy weak shoulders, make bold ly faith to lay the heaviest end of thy burden on Gods shoulder, which is thine (if a believer) as sure as God can make it by promise. When at any time thou art sick of thy work, and ready to think with *Jonas* to run from it; encourage thy selfe with that of God to *Gidion*, whom he call'd from the flaile to thresh the mountains, *Go in this thy might*, hath not God call'd thee? fall to the work God sets thee about, and thou engagest his strength for thee. *The way of the Lord is strength.* Run from thy work, and thou engagest Gods strength against thee, hee'll send some storm or other after thee to bring home his run away servant. How oft hath the Coward been kill'd in a ditch, or under some hedge, when the valiant souldier that stood his ground & kept his place got off with safety and honour? Art thou call'd to suffer? flinch not because thou art afraid, thou shalt never be able to bear the crosse; God can lay it so even, thou shalt not feel it; though thou shouldest finde no succour till thou comest to the prison-door, yea, till thou hast one foot on the ladder, or thy neck on the block, despair not. *In the Mount will the Lord be seen.* And in that houre he can give thee such a looke of his sweet face, as shall make the blood come in the gasly face of a cruel death, and appear lovely in thy eye for his sake. He can give thee so much comfort in hand, as thou shalt acknowledge God is aforehand with thee, for all thy shame & pain thou canst endure for him; And if it should not amount to this, yet so much as will bear all thy charges thou canst be put to in the way, lies ready told in that promise, *1 Cor. 10. 13.*

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Thou

3.

Thou shalt have it at sight, and this may satisfie a Christian, especially if he considers, though he doth not carry so much of heavens joy about him to heaven as others, yet he shall meet it as soon as he comes to his Fathers house, where it is reserved for him. In a word, Christian, rely upon thy God, and make thy daily applications to the throne of grace, for continual supplies of strength: you little think how kind y he takes it, that you will make use of him, the oftner the better, and the more you come for, the more welcome; else why would Christ have told his disciples, *Hitherto you have ask't nothing*; but to expresse his large heart in giving, loath to put his hand to his purse for a little, and therefore by a familiar kind of Rhetorick puts the n to rise higher in asking, as *Naaman* when *Gebazi* asks one talent, entreats him to take two: such a bountifull heart thy God hath, while thou art asking a little peace and joy, he bids thee open thy mouth wide, and hee'll fill it. Go and ransack thy heart, Christian, from one end to the other, finde out thy wants, acquaint thy selfe with all thy weaknesses, and set the n before the Almighty, as the *Widow* her empty vessels before the *Prophet*, ha!st thou more then thou canst bring, thou mayest have them all fill'd. God hath strength enough to give, but he hath no strength to deny, here the Almighty himselfe (with reverence be it spoken) is weak; even a childe, the weakest in grace of his family, that can but say Father, is able to overcome him; and therefore let not the weaknesse of thy faith discourage thee. No greater motive to the bowels of mercy to stir up Almighty power to relieve thee, then thy weaknesse when pleaded in the sense of it. The pale face and thin cheeks (I hope) move more with us, then the canting language of a stout sturdy beggar. Thus that soule that comes laden in the sense of his weak faith, love, patience, the very weaknesse of them carries an argument along with them for succour.



CHAP. V.

*Wherein is answered a grand Objecti-
on, that some disconsolate soules may raise against the
former Discourse.*

O But, saith some disconsolate Christian, I have prayed again
and again for strength against such a corruption, and to *Object.*
this day my hands are weak, and these sons of *Zerviah* are so
strong, that I am ready to say, all the Preachers do but flatter
me, that do poure their oyle of comfort upon my head, and tell
me I shall at last get the conquest of these mine enemies, and
see that joyfull day wherein with *David*, I shall sing to the Lord,
for delivering me out of the hands of all mine enemies. I have
prayed for strength for such a duty, and finde it come off as weak-
ly and dead-heartedly as before. If God be with me by his
mighty power to help me, why then is all this befallen me?

First, look once again, poor heart, into thy own bosom, and see *Ans. 1.*
whether thou findest not some strength sent into thee, which thou
didst over-look before; this may be, yea, is very ordinary in this
case, when God answers our prayer not in the letter, or when the
thing it selfe is sent, but it comes in at the back door, while we
are expecting it at the fore; and truly thus the friend thou art
looking for, may be in thine house and thou not know it. Is not
this thy case, poor soul? thou hast been praying for strength a-
gainst such a lust, and now thou wouldest have God presently put
forth his power to knock it on the head, and lay it for dead, that
it should never stir more in thy bosome: is not this the doore
thou hast stood looking for God to come in at, and no sight or
newes of thy God his coming that way? thy corruption yet sties,
it may be is more troublesome then before; now thou askest wher
is the strength promised to thy relief? let me intreat thee before
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thou layest down this sad Conclusion against thy God or self, see whether he hath not conveyed in some strength by another door : Perhaps thou hast not strength to conquer it so soon as thou desirest, but hath he not given further praying strength against it? Thou prayest before, but now more earnestly, all the powers of thy soul are up to plead with God; Before thou wast more favourable and moderate in thy request, now thou hast a zeal, thou canst take no deniall, yea, welcome any thing in the room of thy corruption; Would God but take thy sin and send a crosse, thou wouldest blesse him : Now poor soul, is this nothing, no strength? Had not thy God re-inforced thee, thy sin would have weakened thy spirit of prayer, and not increased it. *David* began to recover himselfe, when he began to recover his Spirit of prayer. The stronger the cry, the stronger the childe, I warrant you. *Jacob* wrestled, and this is called his strength *Hos. 12.* It appeared, there was much of God in him that he could take such hold of the Almighty, as to keep it, though God seemed to shake him off; If thus thou art enabled, soule, to deal with the God of heaven, no feare but thou shalt be much more able to deal with sin and Satan. If God hath given thee so much strength, to wrestle with him above and against denials thou hast prevailed with the stronger of the two : overcome God, and he'll overcome the other for thee. Again, perhaps thou hast been praying for further strength to be communicated to thee in duty, that thou mightest be more spiritual, vigorous, united, sincere, and the like therein, and yet thou findest thy old distempers hanging about thee, as if thou hadst never acquainted God with thy aile; Well, soule, look once again into thy bosome with an unprejudiced eye, though thou dost not find the assisting strength thou prayedst for yet hast thou no more self-abasing strength? perhaps the annoyance thou hast from these remaining distempers in duty, occasion thee to have a meaner opinion of all thy duties then ever, yea, they make thee abhor thy selfe in the sense of these, as if thou hadst so many loathsome vermine about thee. *Jobs* condition on the dunghill, with all his botches and running sores on his body, appears desirable to thee, in comparison of thine, whose soul thou complaineest worse then his body. O this afflicts my soul deeply, doth it not? that thou, shouldest appeare before the Lord with such a dead, divided heart
and

and do his work worst that deserves best at thy hands, and is all this nothing? Surely, Christian, thine eyes are held as much as *Hagars*, or else thou wouldest see the streamings forth of divine grace in this frame of thy heart; surely others will think God hath done a mighty work in thy soule; What harder and more against the haire, then to bring our proud hearts to take shame for that, whereof they naturally boast and glory? And is it nothing for thee to tread on the very neck of thy duties, & count them matter of thy humiliation and abasing, which others make the matter of their confidence and selfe re-joycing? Good store of vertue hath gone from Christ, to dry this issue of pride in thy heart, which sometimes in gracious ones runs through and through their duties, that it is seen or many be by those that have lesse grace then themselves.

Secondly, Christian, candidly interpret Gods dealings with thee. Suppose it be as thou sayest, thou hast pleaded the promise, and waited on the means, and yet findest no strength from all these receipts, either in thy grace or comfort, now take heed of charging God foolishly, as if God were not what he promisseth, this were to give that to Satan which he is all this while gaping for. It is more becoming the dutiful disposition of a child, when he hath not presently what he writes for to his father, to say, my father is wiser then I, his wisdom will prompt him, what and when to send to me, and his fatherly affections to me his childe, will neither suffer him to deny anything that is good, or slip the time that is seasonable. Christian, thy heavenly Father hath gracious ends that hold his hand at present, or else thou hadst ere this heard from him.

First, God may deny further degrees of strength to put thee on the exercise of that thou hast more carefully. As a mother doth by her childe, that is learning to go, she sets it down, and stands some distance from it, and till it come to her, the childe feels its legs weak, and cries for the mothers help, but the mother steps back on purpose, that the childe should put forth all its little strength in making after her: When a poor soul comes and prays against such a sin, God seems to step back and stand at a distance; the temptation increases, and no visible succour appears, on purpose that the Christian, though weak should exercise that strength he hath. Indeed we shall finde the sense

of a soules weaknesse, is an e special means to excite it into a further care and diligence: One that knows his weaknesse, how prone he is in company to forget him'self, in passion how apt he is to flie out, if there be a principle of true grace, this will excite him to be more fearful and watchful, then another that hath obtained greater strength against such great temptations. As a child that writes for mony to his father, none comes presently, this makes him husband that little he hath the better, not a penny now shall he lide out idly; Thus when a Christian hath pray'd against such a sin again and again, and yet finds him'self weak, prone to be worsted, O how carefull will this, should this make such a one of every company; of every occasion? Such a one shall not need give his enemy any advantage.

2. Secondly, God may deny the Christian such assisting strength in duty, or mortifying strength of corruption as he desires purely on a gracious design, that he may there'y have an advantage of expressing his love in such a way, as shall most kindly work upon the ingenuity of the soule to love God again. Perhaps (Christian) thou prayest for a mercy thou wantest, or for deliverance out of some great affliction, and in the duty thou findest not more assistance then ordinary, yea, many distractions of spirit in it, and mis-giving thoughts with unbelieving feares after it; Well, notwithstanding those defects in thy duty, yet God heares thy prayer, and sends in the mercy on purpose, that he may greaten his love in thine eye, and make it more luscious and sweet to thy tast, from his accepting thy weak services and passing by the distempers, of thy spirit. Here is lesse strength for the duty, that thou mayest have more love in the mercy, nothing will affect a gracious heart more then such a consideration. See it in David, *1st Sal.* 116. 11, 12. *I said in my hate, All men are liars. When shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?* As if David had said, notwithstanding all the comfortable messages I had from God by his Prophets concerning this matter, my own prayers, and those remarkable providences, which curried in them a partial answer to them, and performance of what was promised, yet I betray'd much unbelief, questioning the truth of the one, and the return of the other; and hath God notwithstanding all my infirmities fulfill'd my desire, and performed his promise? O what shall I render unto the Lord? Thus David reades

reads Gods mercy through the spectacles of his own weaknesse and infirmity, and it appears great, whereas if a mercy should come in, as an answer to a duty managed with such strength of faith, and height of other graces, as might free him and his duty from usual infirmities, this might prove a snare, and occasion some self-applauding, rather than mercy-admiring thoughts in the creature.

Thirdly, God may communicate the lesse of his assisting strength, that he may shew the more of his supporting strength, in upholding weak grace: We do not wonder to see a man of strong constitution, that eats his bread heartily, and sleeps soundly, live: But for a crazie body, full of ailes and infirmities, to be so patcht and shored up by the Physicians Art that he stands so old age, this begets some wonder in the beholders. It may be thou art a poor trembling soule, thy faith is weak, and thy assaults from Satan strong, thy corruptions stirring and active, and thy mortifying strength little, so that in thy opinion they rather gain ground on thy grace, then give ground to it, ever, and anon thou art ready to think, thou shalt be cast as a wrack upon the devils shoare: and yet to this day thy grace lives, though full of leaks; now is it not worth the stepping aside to see this strange sight? A broken ship with masts and hull rent and torne, thus towed along by Almighty power, through an angry sea, and Armadoes of sins and devils, safely into its harbour. To see a poore dilling or rush candle in the face of the boisterous winde, and not blown out; In a word, to see a weak stripling in grace held up in Gods armes, till he beates the devil craven: This God is doing in upholding thee: thou art one of those babes, out of whose mouth God is perfecting his praise, by ordaining such strength for thee, that thou a babe in grace, shalt yet foile a giant in wrath and power.

Thirdly, if a ter long waiting for strength from God, it be as thou complaine'st, enquire whether the *τὸ κτῆνος*, that which hinders, be not found in thy self. The head is the seat of animal spirits, yet there may be such obstructions in the body, as the other members may for a time be deprived of them; till the passage be free between Christ thy head and thee, thy strength will not come, and therefore be willing to enquire.

First, hast thou come indeed to God for strength to performe duty,

duty to mortifie corruption and the like? perhaps thou wilt say, Yes, I have waited on th^e Ordinance, which are the way in which he hath promised to give out strength But is this all? thou mayest come to them, and not wait on God in them. Hast thou not carnally expected strength from them, and so put the Ordinance, as she her husband in Gods stead? Hath not the frame of thy spirit some affinity with theirs in *James* 4. 13. *We will go into such a city, and buy, and sell, and get gaine*: Hath not thy heart said I will go and hear such a man, and get comfort, get strength? and dost thou wonder thou art weak, barren and unfruitfull? Are Ordinances, God, that they should make you strong or comfortable? Thou mayest heare them answer thee, poor soul, as the King to the woman in the siege of *Samaria*: Help, O prayer, sayest thou, or, O Minister, How can they help except the Lord help? These are but Christ servants: Christ keeps the Key of his wine-cellar, they cannot so much as make you drink, when you come to their Masters house; and therefore, poor soul, stay not short of Christ, but presse through all the croud of Ordinances, and ask to speak with Jesus, to see Jesus and touch him, and vertue will come forth.

2. Secondly, ask thy soule whether thou hast been thankful for that little strength thou hast; though thou art not of that strength in grace, to run with the formost, and hold pace with the tallest of thy brethren, yet art thou thankful that thou hast any strength at all? though it be but to cry after them, who in thou seest out-strip thee in grace, this is worth thy thanks. All in *Davids* army attained not to be equal with his few Worthies in prowesse and honour, and yet did not cashiere themselves: thou hast reason to be thankful for the meanest place in the army of Saints, the least communications of Gospel-mercy and grace must not be overlook't. As soon as ever *Moses* with his army was through the sea, they strike up before they stir from the bank-side, and acknowledge the wonderful appearance of Gods power and mercy for them, though this was but one step in their way; a howling wildernesse presented it self to them, and they not able to subsist a few dayes with all their provision, for all their great victory, yet *Moses*, he will praise God for this handfel of mercy. This holy man knew the only way to keep credit with God, so as to have more, was to keep touch, and pay down

down his praise for what was received. If thou wouldst have fuller communications of divine strength, owne God in what he hath done. Art thou weak? blesse God thou hast life. Doeſt thou through feebleneſſe often faile in duty, and fall into temptation? Mourne in the ſenſe of theſe: yet blesse God, that thou doſt not live in a total neglect of duty, out of a prophane contempt thereof, and that in ſtead of falling through weakneſſe, thou doſt not lie in the mire of ſin through the wickedneſſe of thy heart. The unthankful ſoul may thank it ſelf, it thrives not better.

Thirdly, art thou humble under the aſſiſtance and ſtrength God hath given thee? pride ſtops the conduit; if the heart begin to ſwell: it is time for God to hold his hand and turne the cock, for all that is poured on ſuch a ſoule runs over into ſelf-applauding, and ſo is as water ſpilt in regard of any good it doth the creature, or any glory it brings to God. A proud heart and a loſty mountain are never fruitfull. Now beſide the common wayes that pride diſcovers its ſelfe, as by under-valuing others, and over-valuing it ſelfe, and ſuch like, you ſhall obſerve two other ſymptomes of it. Firſt, it appears in bold adventures, when a perſon runs into the mouth of temptation, bearing himſelfe up on the confidence of his grace receiv^d. This was *Peters* ſin, by which he was drawn to engage further then became an humble faith, running into the devils quarters, and ſo became his priſoner for a while. The good man, when in his right temper, had thoughts low enough of himſelf, as when he ask't his Maſter, *It is I?* but he that feared at one time, leſt he might be the traitour, at another cannot think ſo ill of himſelf, as to ſuſpect he ſhould be the denyer of his Maſter. What he? No, though all the reſt ſhould forſake him, yet he would ſtand to his colours; Is this thy caſe, Chriſtian? Poſſibly God hath given thee much of his minde, thou art ſkilfull in the Word of life, and therefore thou dareſt venture to breath in corrupt aire, as if onely the weak ſpirits of leſſe knowing Chriſtians, expoſed them to be infected with the contagion of errour and hereſie; Thou haſt a large portion of grace, or at leaſt thou thinkeſt ſo, and ventureſt to go where an humble-minded Chriſtian would fear his heels ſhould ſlip under him. Truly now thou tempteſt God to ſuffer thy lock to be cut, when thou art ſo bold to lay

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thy head in the lap of a temptation. Secondly; pride appears in the neglect of those means, whereby the Saints graces and comforts are to be fed when strongest. Maybe, Christian, when thou art under feares and doubts then God hath thy company, thou art oft with thy pitcher at his doore, but when thou hast got any measure of peace, there growes presently some strangeness between God and thee: thy pitcher walks not as it was wont to these Wells of salvation. No wonder if thou (though rich in grace and comfort) goest behinde-hand, seeing thou spendest on the old stock, and drivest no trade at present to bring in more: Or if thou doest not thus neglect duty, yet may be thou doest not perform it with that humility, which formerly beautified the same: then thou prayedst in the sense of thy weakness to get strength, now thou prayest to shew thy strength, that others may admire thee. And if once (like *Hezekiah*) we call in Spectators to see our treasure, and applaud us for our gifts and comfort, then it is high time for God, if he indeed love us, to send some messengers to carry these away from us, which carry our hearts from him.

4. Fourthly, if thy heart doth not smite thee from what hath been said, but thou hast sincerely waited on God, and yet hast not received the strength thou desirest, yet let it be thy resolution to live and die waiting on him. God doth not tell us his time of coming, and it were boldness to set on of our own heads. Go, saith Christ to his disciples, *Luke 24. 49. Stay ye in Jerusalem, until ye be endued with Power from on High.* Thus he saith to thee, stay at Jerusalem, wait on him in the meanes he hath appointed, till thou beest endued with further power to mortifie thy corruptions, &c. And for thy comfort know.

1. First, thy thus persevering to wait on God, will be an evidence of strong grace in thee: the lesse encouragement thou hast to duty, the more thy faith and obedience to bear thee up in duty. He that can trade when times are so dead, that all his ware lies upon his hand, and yet drawes not in his hand, but rather trades more and more, sure his stock is great. What, no comfort in hearing, no ease to thy spirit in praying, and yet more greedy to heare, and more frequent in prayer? O soul, great is thy faith and patience.

And in the Power of his might. 51

Secondly, assure thy self when thou art at the greatest pinch 2.
strength shall come: *They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength*: when the last handfull of meale was dressing, then is the Prophet sent to keep the Widows house. When temptation is strong, thy little strength even spent, and thou ready to yield into the hands of thine enemies, then expect succoures from heaven to enable thee to hold out-under the temptation: Thus to Paul, *My grace is sufficient*, or power from heaven to raise the siege, and drive away the tempter; thus to Job, when Satan had him at an advantage, then God takes him off. Like a wife Moderatour, when the Respondent is hard put to it by a subtile Opponent, takes him off, when he would else run him down. James 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*



EPHESIANS 6. II.

*Put on the whole Armour of God,
that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*



His verse is a Key to the former, wherein the Apostle had exhorted believers to encourage, and bear up their fainting spirits on the Lord, and the power of his might. Now in these words he explains himself, and shewes how he would have them do this, not presumptuously come into the field without that armour, which God hath appointed to be worne by all his souldiers, and yet with a bravado to trust in the power of God to save them. That soule is sure to fall short of home, (heaven I mean) who hath nothing but a carnal confidence on the Name of God, blown up by the ignorance of God and himself: No, he that would have his confidence duly placed on the Power of God, must conscientiously use the meanes appointed for his defence, and not rush naked into the battel, like that fanaticke spirit at *Munster*, who would needs go forth, and chase away the whole army, then besieging that city, with no other cannon, then a few words charged with the Name of *The Lord of hostes*, (which he blasphemously made bold to use) saying, *In the Name of the Lord of hostes depart.* But himself soon perisheth; to learne others wisdom by what he paid for his folly. What foolish braving language shall you hear drop from the lips of the most prophane and ignorant among us? they trust in God, hope in his mercy, despise the devil and all his works, and such like stuffe, who yet are poor naked creatures, without the least piece of Gods armour upon their souls. To cashiere such presumption from the Saints Camp, he annexeth this Directory to his exhortation, *Put on the whole armour of God, &c.* So that the words fall into these two general parts.

First,

Put on the whole Armour of God. 35

First, a Direction annex't to the former Exhortation, shewing how we may in a regular way come to be strong in the Lord, that is, by putting on *the whole armour of God*. 1.

Secondly, a reason or argument strengthening this Direction *that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*. In the Direction observe, 2.

First the furniture he directs, and that is *Armour*. 1.

Secondly, the kinde or quality of this Armour, *Armour of God*. 2.

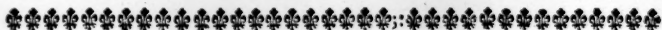
Thirdly, the quantity or entireness of the Armour; *The whole Armour of God*. 3.

Fourthly, the use of this Armour; *Put on the whole Armour of God*. 4.

To begin with the first, the furniture which every one must get that would fight Christs battels. The question here will be, What is this Armour?

First by armour is meant Christ; we read of putting on *the Lord Jesus*, Rom. 13. 14. where Christ is set forth under the notion of Armour. The Apostle doth not exhort them for rioting and drunkenness, to put on sobriety and temperance; for chambering and wantonness, put on chastity; (as the Philosopher would have done) but bids, *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ*; imploying thus much till Christ be put on the creature is unarmed. 'Tis not a mans morality and philosophical virtues, that will repel a temptation, sent with a full charge from Satans cannon, though possibly it may the pistol-shot of some lesse solicitation; so that he is the man in Armour, that is in Christ. Again, the Graces of Christ these are Armour, as *the Girdle of truth, the breast plate of righteousness*, and the rest. Hence we are bid also put on *the new man*, Eph. 4. 24. which is made up of all the several graces, as its parts and members. And he is the unarmed soule, that is the unregenerate soule. Not excluding those duties and means which God hath appointed the Christian to use for his defence.

The phrase thus opened; the Point is.



CHAP. I.

*Seweth the Christlesse and gracelesse
soul, to be the soul without Armor, and therein his misery.*

Observ.

THat a person in a Christlesse, gracelesse state is naked and unarm'd, and so unfit to fight Christs battels against sin and Satan. Or thus, A soule out of Christ is naked and destitute of all armour to defend him against sin and Satan. God at first sent man forth in compleat armour *being created in righteousness and true holiness*; but by a wile the devil strip't him, and therefore as soon as the first sin was compleated, it is written, *Gen. 3. 7. They were naked*, that is, poor weak creatures, at the will of Satan a subdued people, disarm'd by their proud Conquerour, and unable to make head against him. Indeed it cost Satan some dispute to make the first branch, but after that he hath once the gates open'd to let him in as Conquerer into the heart of man, he playes *Rex*: behold, a troop of other sins croud in after him, without any stroak or strife, in stead of confessing their sins, they run their head in a bush, and by their good will would not come where God is, and when they cannot flie from him, how do they prevaricate before him? They peale one of another, shifting the sin rather then suing for mercy. So quickly were their hearts hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And this is the woful condition of every son and daughter of *Adam*, naked he finds us, and slaves he makes us, till God by his effectual call delivers us from the power of Satan into the *Kingdome of his dear Son*, which will further appear, if we consider this Christlesse state in a foure-fold notion.

- I. First, it is a state of alienation from God, *Ephes. 2. 12. Ye were without Christ, being aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, strangers from the Covenant of Promise, &c.* Such a one hath no more to do with any Covenant-promise, then he that lives at *Rome* hath to do with the Charter of *London*, which is the

the birth-right of its own Deni ons, not Strangers. He is without God in the world, he can claim no more protection from God, then an out-law'd subject from his Prince; If any mischief befalls him, the mends is in his own hands, whereas God hath his hedge of special providence about his Saints, and the devil, though his spite be most at them, dares not come upon Gods ground to touch any of them, without particular leave. Now what a deplored condition is that wherein a soule is left to the wide world, in the midst of legions of lust and devils, to be rent and torne like a silly hare among a pack of hounds, and no God to call them off? Let God leave a people, though never so warlike, presently they lose their wits, cannot finde their hands; A company of children or wounded men may rise up, and chase them out of their fenced Cities, because God is not with them; which made *Caleb* and *Joshuab* pacifie the mutinous Israelites at the tidings of giants and walled cities with this; *They are bread for us, their defence is departed from them.* How much more must that soule be as bread to Satan, that hath no defence from the Almighty? Take men of the greatest parts, natural or acquired accomplishments, who only want an union with Christ, and renewing grace from Christ: O what fooles doth the devil make of them, leading them at his pleasure, some to one lust, some to another; the proudest of them all is slave to one or other, though it be to the ruining of body and soul for ever, Where lies the mystery, that men of such parts and wisdom, should debase themselves to such drudgery work of hell? even here, they are in a state of alienation from God, and no more able of themselves to break the devils prison, then a slave to run from his chain.

Secondly, the Christlesse state is a state of ignorance, and such must needs be naked and unarm'd. He that cannot see his enemy, how can he ward off the blow he sends? One seeing Prophet leads a whole army of blind men whither he pleaseth. The imperfect knowledge Saints have here, is Satans advantage against them; he often takes them on the blinde side, how easily then may he with a parcel of good words carry the blinde soule out of his way, who knowes not a step of the right? Now that the Christlesse state is a state of ignorance, See *Eph. 5. 8.* *Ye were sometimes darknesse, but now are ye light in the Lord.* Ye were

were *darknesse*, not in the dark, so one that hath an eye may be. A child of light is often in the dark, concerning some truth or promise, but then hath a spiritual eye, which the Christlesse person wants, and so is darknesse. And this darknesse cannot be enlightened, but by its union with Christ, which is express in the following phrase; *But now are ye light in the Lord*. As the eye of the body once put out, can never be restored by the creatures Art, so neither can the spiritual eye, lost by *Adams* sin, be restored by the teaching of men or Angels. It is one of the diseases which Christ came to cure, *Luke 4. 18*. 'Tis true, there is a light of reason, which is imparted to every man by nature, but this light is darknesse compared with the Saints. As the night is dark to the day, even when the Moon is in its full glory. This night-light of Reason may save a person from some ditch or pond, great and broad sins, but it will never help him to escape the more secret corruptions, which the Saints sees like attomes in the beams of spiritual knowledge. There is such curious work the creature is to do, which cannot be wrought by candle-light of natural knowledge. Nay more, where the common illumination of the Spirit is superadded to this light of nature, yet that is darknesse compar'd with the sanctifying knowledge of a renewed soule, which doth both discover spiritual truthes, and warme the heart at the same time with the love of truth, having like the Son a prolificall and quickening vertue, which the other wants; so that the heart lies under such common illuminations, cold and dead. He hath no more strength to resist Satan, then if he knew not the command; whereas the Christians knowledge even when taken Prisoner by a temptation, pursues and brings back the soul as *Abraham* his Nephew, out of the enemies hands; which hints the third.

3. Thirdly, the Christlesse state is a state of impotency, *Rom. 5: When we were without strength, Christ came to die for the ungodly*. What can a disarm'd people that have not sword or gun do to shake off the yoke of a conquering enemy? Such a power hath Satan over the soule, *Luke 11. 21*. he is call'd the *strong man* that keeps the soule as his *Palace*: If he hath no disturbance from heaven, he need feare no mutiny within; he keeps all in peace there. What the Spirit of God doth in a Saint, that in a manner doth Satan in a sinner. The Spirit fills
the

the heart of his with love, joy, holy desires, feares; so Satan fills the sinners heart with pride, lust, lying: *Why hath Satan filled thy heart, saith Peter?* And thus fill'd with Satan (as the drunkard with wine) he is not his own man, but Satans slave.

Fourthly, the state of unregeneracy is a state of friendship with sin and Satan. If it be enmity against God, (as it is) then friendship with Satan. Now it will be hard to make that soule fight in earnest against his friend. Is Satan divid'd? will the devil within fight against the devil without? Satan in the heart shut out Satan at the door? sometimes indeed there appears a scuffle between Satan and a carnal heart, but it is a meer cheat, like the fighting of two fencers on a stage, you would think at first they were in earnest, but observing how wary they are, where they hit one another, you may soon know they do not mean to kill: and that which puts all out of doubt, when the prize is done, you shall see them making merry together, with what they have got of their Spectatours, which was all they fought for; when a carnal heart makes the greatest bufile against sin by complaining of it, or praying against it, follow him but off the stage of duty, (where he hath gained the reputation of a Saint, the prize he fights for) and you shall see them sit as friendly together in a corner as ever.

First this takes away the wonder of Satans great Conquests in the world: when you look abroad, and see his vast Empire, and what a little spot of ground contains Christs subjects, what heaps of precious souls lie prostrate under this foot of pride, and what a little regiment of Saints march under Christs banner; perhaps the strangeness of the thing may make you ask, Is hell stronger then heaven? the armes of Satan more victorious then the Crosse of Christ? No such matters: Consider but this one thing, and you will wonder that Christ hath any to follow him rather then that he hath so few. Satan findes the world unarm'd when the Prince of the world comes, he findes nothing to oppose; the whole soule is in a disposition to yield at first summons; and if Conscience, Governour for God in the creature stands out a while, all the other powers, as will and affections are in a discontent, (like mutinous souldiers in a garrison) who never rest till they have brought over conscience to yield, or
against

against its command set open the City gate to the enemy, and so deliver traitorously their conscience prisoner to their lusts: But when Christ comes to demand the soul, he meets a scornful answer: *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of the most High. We will not have this man to reign over us.* With one consent they vote against him, and rise up as the Philistines against Samson whom they call'd the Destroyer of the country. *Ye will not come unto me,* saith Christ. O how true are poor sinners to the devils trust! They will not deliver the Cause they hold for Satan, till fired over their heads. Pharaoh opposeth Moses on one hand, and Israel cry out upon him on the other. Such measure hath Christ both at Satans hand, and the sinners. That which lessened Alexanders Conquests, was, he overcame a people buried in barbarism, without armes or discipline of war; and that which heightened Cæsars, (though not so many) he overcame a people more warlike and furnish'd. Satans victories are of poor ignorant, gracelesse souls, who have neither armes, nor hands, nor hearts to oppose; but when he assaults a Saint, then he sits down before a city with gates and bars, and ever riseth with shame; unable to take the weakest hold, to pluck the weakest Saint out of Christs hands; but Christ brings souls out of his dominion with a high hand, in spite of all the force and fury of hell, which like Pharaoh and his host pursue them.

Use 2.

Secondly, this gives us a reason why the devil hath so great a spite against the Gospel. Why? because this opens a magazine of armes and furniture for the soule; the Word is that *Tower of David, Cant. 4. 4. built for an Armoury, wherein there hang a thousand bucklers; all the shields of mighty men.* Hence the Saints have ever had their armour, and the preaching of the Gospel unlocks it. As Gospel-light ascends, so Satans shady Kingdom of darknesse vanisheth. Rev. 14. 6. there one Angel comes forth to preach the everlasting Gospel, and another Angel follows at his back, verse 8, crying *Victoria, Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* The very first charge the Gospel gave to the Kingdom of darknesse, shak't the foundations thereof, and put the legions of hell to the run. The seventy, whom Christ sent out, bring this speedy account of their ambassage; Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy Name: and Christ answers, *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* As if he had said, 'tis no newes you tell

tell me, I beheld Satan falling when I sent you: I knew the Gospel would make work where it came; and therefore no wonder Satan laboures to dispossesse the Gospel, which dispossesseth him; he knowes that army is near lost, whose magazine is blown up; 'Tis true indeed, under the very Gospel the devil rageth more in such swinish sinners, as are given over of God to be possesst of that fiend, for rejecting of his grace; but he is cast out of others, who *before the loving kindnesse of God to man appeared* in the Gospel, were commanded by him, *servi*ng divers *lusts and pleasures*; But now by the light of the Gospel they see their folly, and by the grace it brings are enabled to renounce him. This, this is that which torments the soule spirit, to see himselfe forsaken of his old friends and servants, and this new Lord to come and take his subjects from him: and therefore he labours either by persecution to drive the gospel away, or by policy to perswade a people to send it away from their coasts, and was he ever more likely to effect it among us? What a low esteem hath he brought the preaching of the Gospel unto? the price is fallen half in half to what it was some yeares past, even among those that have been counted the greatest Merchants upon the Saints Exchange. Some, that have thought it worth crossing the seas, even to the *Indies* (almost as far as others fetch their gold) to enjoy the Gospel, are loath now to crosse the street to hear it at so cheap a rate; And some that come, (who formerly trembled at it) make it most of their errand to mock at, or quarrel with it. Nay, it is come to such a passe, that the Word is so heavy a charge to the squeamish stomachs of many Professors, that it comes up again presently, and abundance of choler with it against the Preacher, especially if it fall soule of the sins and errours of the times, the very naming of which is enough to offend, though the Nation be sinking under their weight. What reproaches are the faithfull Ministers of the Gospel laden withal? I call heaven and earth to witnesse, whether ever they suffered a hotter persecution of the tongue, then in this apostatizing age. A new generation of Professours are started up, that will not know them to be the Ministers of Christ, though those before them, (as well in grace as time, more able to derive their spiritual pedigree, then themselves) have to their death owned them for their spiritual fathers. And must not the

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Ark needs shake, when they that carry it are thus struck at, both in their person and office? what are these men doing? alas, they know not, *Father, forgive them*: They are cutting off their right hand with their left; they are making themselves and the Nation naked, by despising the Gospel, and those that bring it.

Use 3.

Consider your deplored estate, who are wholly naked and unarm'd. Can you pity the begger at your door, (when you see such in a Winter-day, shivering with naked backs, exposed to the fury of the cold) and not pity your own far more dismal soul-nakednesse, by which thou liest open to heavens wrath, and hells malice? Shall their nakednesse cover them with shame, fill them with feare of perishing, which makes them with pitifull moanes knock and cry for relief, (as it is reported of *Russia*, where their poor (through extream necessity) have this desperate manner of begging in their streets; *Give me and cut me, give me and kill me?*) and canst thou let Satan come and cut thy throat in thy bed of sloth, rather then accept of clothes to cover, yea, Armour to defend thee? (I mean Christ and his grace, which in the Gospel is tendered to you.) And do not lightly beleieve your own flattering hearts, if they shall tell you, you are provided of these already. I am afraid many a gaudy Professour will be found as naked in regard of Christ, and truth of grace, as drunkards and swearers themselves; Such there are, who content themselves with a Christ in profession, in gifts, and in duties, but seek not a Christ in solid grace, and so perish; those indeed are an ornament to the Christian, as the scarfe and feather to the souldier, but these quench not the bullet in battel, 'tis Christ and his grace doth that, therefore labour to be found rather then brave Christians. Grace embellisht with gifts is the more beautiful, but these without grace only the richer spoile for Satan.

The second Branch of the first general part of the words follows; and that is, the quality or kind of that Armour, the Christian is here directed to provide. It is not any trass will serve the turn, better none then not Armour of proof, and none such, but Armour of God. In a twofold respect it must be of God. First, in institution and appointment. Secondly, in constitution.

CHAP.



CHAP. II.

*Sheweth, that the Armour we use
against Satan, must be divine in the Institution, such only
as God appoints.*

First, the Christians Armour which he weares must be of divine Institution and appointment. The souldier comes into the field with no armes, but what his General commands, *Observ.* 'tis not left to every ones fancy to bring what weapons he please, this will breed confusion. The Christian souldier is bound up to Gods order though the army be on earth, yet the Council of War sits in Heaven; This duty ye shall do, that meanes ye shall use; and to do more or use other then God commands, though with some seeming successe against sin; such shall surely be called to account for this boldnesse. The discipline of war among men is strict in this case. Some have suffered death by a Council of war even when they have beaten the enemy, because out of their place, or beside their order. God is very precise in this point, he will say to such as invent wayes to worship him of their own, coyne meanes to mortifie corruption, obtain comfort in their own mind; *Who hath required this at your hands?* this is truly to be righteous over-much, (as Solomon speaks) when we will pretend to correct Gods Law, and adde supplements of our own to his rule. Who will pay that man his wages that is not set on work by God? God tells *Israel*, the false Prophets shall do them no good, because they come not of his errand: so neither will those wayes and meanes help, which are not of Gods appointing; Gods thoughts are not as mans, nor his wayes as ours, which he useth to attain his ends by. If man had been to set forth the Israelitish army, now to march out of *Egypt*, surely this wisdom would have directed rather to have plundered the *Egyptians* of their horse and armes, (as more necessary for such an expedition)

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on) then to borrow their jewels and eare-rings, but God will have them come out naked and on foot; and *Moses* keeps close to his order; yea, when any horses were taken in battel, because God commanded they should be houghed, they obeyed, though to their seeming disadvantage. It was Gods war they waged, and therefore but reasonable they should be under his command, they encamp't and march't by his order; as the Ark moved or rested, they fight by his command, the number appointed by him, the meanes and weapons they should use, all prescribed by God as in the assault of *Jericho*: and what is the Gospel of all this? (for surely God hath an eye in that to our marching to heaven, and our fighting with these cursed spirits and lusts that stand in our way) but that we should fight lawfully, using those meanes, which we have from his mouth in his Word?

This proveth two sorts:

Use 1.

First those that fight Satan in Armour, that hath no divine Institution, as

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First, the Papist. Look into his armour, and hardly a piece that will be found Armour of God. They fight in the Popes armour: his authority is the shop, wherein their weapons are forged; It were a kind of penance to your patience, to repeat all the several pieces of armour, with which they load silly soules, too heavy indeed for the broadest shoulders among them to bear; yea, more then the wiser sort of them mean to use, their masses, mattens, vigils, pilgrimages, Lent-fasts, whippings, vows of chastity, poverty, with a world of such trash; where is a Word of God for these? who hath required these things at their hands? a thousand woes will one day fall upon those Impostors, who have strip't the people of the true Armour of God, and put these reeds and bulrushes in their hands. This may justifie us in the fight of God and men, for our departure from them, who will force us to venture the life of our soules in such, paper-armour, when God hath provided better.

Secondly, the carnal Protestant, who fights in fleshly armour. 2 Cor. 10. 3. the Apostle speaks there of *warring after the flesh*, that is, with weapons or means, which mans carnal wisdom prompts to, and not God commands, and so are weak. How few are clad with other in the day of battel; First, when Satan

tan tempts to sin, if he hath not presently a peaceable enterance; yet the resistance commonly made is carnal; the strength carnal they rest on, their own, not Gods; the motives carnal, as the fear of man more then of God: where one saith, How shall I do this and sin against God? many in their hearts say, How shall I do this and anger man, displease my Master, provoke my Parents, and lose the good opinion of my Minister? Herod feared John, and did many things: had he fear'd God, he would have laboured to have done every thing. The like may be said of all other motives, which have their spring in the creature, not in God; they are armour which will not out-stand shot. If thy strength lie in a creature-lock, it may be soon cut off; if in God it will hold, as his command; *It is written: I cannot do it, but I must set my foot on the Law of my Maker.* Or the love of Christ; I cannot come to my lust, but I must go over my bleeding Saviour, and therefore away, soule Tempter, I hate thee and thy motion. This foundation is rock, and will stand; but if it be some carnal respect that balanceth thee, another more weighty may be found of the same kinde, which will cast the scales another way. She that likes not the man because of his dresse only, may soon be gain'd when he comes in another habit. Satan can change his suit, and then thy mouth will be stop't when thy carnal argument is taken off. Secondly, when the Word or Conscience reuke for sin, what is the armour that men commonly cover their guilty soules withal? truly no other then carnal. If they cannot evade the charge that the'e bring, then they labour to mitigate it, by extenuating the fact. 'Tis true, will they say, I did (I confesse) commit such a fault, but I was drawn in; *The woman gave me, and I did eate, was Adams fig-leaf armour:* 'tis but once or twice, and I hope that breaks no such squares, was this such a great businesse? I know jolly Christians will do as much as this comes to; I thank God, I cannot be charged for whore or thief. This is the armour that must keep off the blow. But if Conscience will not be thus taken off, then they labour to divert their thoughts, by striking up the loud musick of carnal delights, that the noise of one may drown the other, or with *Cain*, they will go from the presence of the Lord, and come no more at those Ordinances which make their head ake, and hinder the rest of their raving consciences. If yet the ghost haunts them,

them, then they labour to pacifie it, wth some good work or other, which they set against their bad; their almes and charity in their old age, must expiate the oppression and violence of their former dayes: as if this little frankincense were enough to aie and take away the plague of Gods curse, which is in their ill gotten goods. Thus poor creatures catch at any sorry covering, which will not so much as hide their shame, much lesse choak the bullet of Gods wrath; when God shall fire upon them; this must be Armour of Gods appointing. *Adam was naked for*

Gen. 3. 21. *all his fig-leaves, while God taught him to make coats of skins, covertly (as some think) shadowing out Christ the true Lambe of God, whose righteousness alone was appointed by him to cover our shame, and arme our naked souls from the sight and stroke of his justice.*

2. Secondly, it reproves those who use the Armour of God, but not as God hath appointed, which appears in three sorts.

1. First when a person useth a duty appointed by God, not as Armour of defence against sin, but as a cover for sin. Who would think him an enemy that weares Christs colours in his hat, and marcheth after Christ in his exercise of all the duties of his worship? such a one may passe all the Courts of guard, without so much as being bid stand, all take him for a friend; and yet some such there are, who are fighting against Christ all the while. The hypocrite is the man, he learnes his postures, gets the Word, hath his tongue tip't with Scripture-language, and walks in the habit of a Christian, meerly on a design to drive his trade the more closely, Like some high-way men in our dayes, who rob in the habit of souldiers, that they may be the lesse suspected; this is desperate wickednesse indeed, to take up Gods armes, and use them in the devils service; of all sinners such shall finde least mercy; false friends shall spend worse then open enemies.

2. Secondly, they use not the Armour of God, as God hath appointed, who put a carnal confidence therein. We must not confide in the Armour of God, but in the God of this Armour, because all our weapons are only mighty through God, 2 Cor. 10. The Ark was the meanes of the Jewes safety, but carnally applauded and gloried in, hastened their overthrow: so duties and Ordinances, gifts and graces in their place, are meanes for the souls

soules defence; Satan trembles as much as the *Philistines* at the *Ark*, to see a soule diligent in the use of duty, and exercise of grace; but when the creature confides in them, this is dangerous. As some, when they have prayed, think they please God for all day, though they take little heed to ther steps. Others have so good an opinion of their faith, sincerity, knowledge, that you may assoon make them believe they are dogs, as that they may ever be taken in such an error or sinful practice. Others, when assisted in duty, are prone to stroak their own head with a *Bene fecisti Bernarde*, and so promise themselves to speed, because they have done their errand so well. What speak such passages in the hearts of men, but a carnal confidence in their armour to their ruine? Many soules (we may safely say) do not only perish praying, repenting and believing after a sort, but they perish by their praying and repenting, &c. while they carnally trust in these. As it falls out sometimes, that theould er in batel loseth his life by meanes of his own Armour, it is so heavy he cannot flie with it, and so close buckled to him, that he cannot get it off, to flie for his life without it. If we be saved, we must come naked to Christ for all our duties, we will not flie to Christ while confiding in them, and some are so lock't into them, that they cannot come without them, and so in a day of temptation are trampled under the feet of Gods wrath, and Satans fury. The poor *Publican* throwes downe his armes, (that is, all confidence in himself) cries for quarter at the hands of mercy; *God be merciful unto me a sinner*, and he comes off with his life, he went away justified: but the Pharisee, loaden with his righteousnesse, and conceited of it, stands to it, and is lost.

Thirdly, they do not use the Armour of God as such, who in the performing of divine duties, eye not God through them, and this makes them all weak and uneffectual. Then the Word is mighty, when read as the Word of God, then the Gospel preach't, powerful to convince the conscience, and revive the drooping spirit, when heard, as the appointment of the great God, and not the exercise of a mean creature. Now it will appear in three things, whether we eye divine appointment in the meanes.

First, when we engage in a duty, and look not up to God
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for his blessing. Didst thou eye Gods appointment in the meanes, thou wouldest say, Soul, if there come any good of thy present service, it must drop from heaven, for it is Gods appointment, not mans: And can I profit whether God will or no? or think to finde and bring away any soul-enriching treasure from his Ordinance without his leave? had I not best look up to him, by whose blessing I live more then by my tread?

2. Again, Secondly, it appears we look not at Gods appointment, when we have low thoughts of the means. What is *Jordan* that I should wash in it? what is this preaching that I should attend on it, where I heare nothing but I knew before? what these beggerly elements of water, and bread, and wine? Are not these the reasonings of a soule that forgets who appoints these? Didst thou remember who commands, thou wouldest not question what the command is; what though it be clay, let Christ use it, and it shall open the eyes, though in it self more like to put them out. Hadst thou thy eye on God, thou wouldest silence thy carnal reason with this; 'Tis God sends me to such a duty, whatsoever he saith unto me, I will do it, though he should send me (as Christ them) to draw wine out of pots fill'd with water.

3. Thirdly, when a soule leaves off a duty, because he hath not in it what he expected from it. O, saith the soul, I see it is in vain to follow the means as I have done; still Satan foiles me, I will even give over. Dost thou remember, soule, 'tis Gods appointment? surely then thou wouldest persevere in the midst of discouragements. He that bids thee pray, bids thee pray without ceasing. He that bids thee hear, bids thee wait at the posts of wisdom: thou wouldest reason thus, God hath set me on duty, and here I'll stand, till God takes me off and bids me leave praying.



CHAP. III.

*Sheweth that the Armour we use for
our defence against Satan, must not only be divine by In-
stitution, but constitution also.*

SEConDly, the Christians Armour must be Armour of God in
regard of its make and constitution. My meaning is, 'tis
not only God; that must appoint the weapons and armes, the
Christian useth for his defence : but he must also be the efficient
of them, he must work all their work in them and for them.
Prayer is an appointment of God, yet this is not armour of proof,
except it be a Prayer of God flowing from his Spirit. Hope,
that is the helmet the Saint by command is to wear, but this hope
must be Gods creature ; *who hath begotten us to a lively hope.* Jude 20.
Faith that's another principal piece in the Christians furniture,
but it must be *the faith of Gods Elect.* He is to take righteous-
nesse and holinesse for his breast-plate : but it must be true holi-
nesse, Eph 4. 24. *Put on the new man, which after God is created*
in righteousness and true holinesse. Thus you see, it is not armour
as armour, but as armour of God, that makes the soul impreg-
nable. *That which is borne of God overcometh the world.* A
faith borne of God, a hope borne of God, but the spurious a-
dulterous brood of duties and graces, being begot of mortal seed,
cannot be immortal.

Must the soules armour be of Gods make? he exhorted then
to look narrowly, whether the armour ye weare, be the work-
manship of God or no. There is abundance of false ware put
off now adayes: little good armour worne by the multitude of
Professours: 'tis Satans after-game he playes, if he cannot please
the sinner with his naked state of prophanenesse; then to put
him off with something like grace, some slighty stuffe, that shall
neither do him good, nor Satan hurt; thus many like children,
that

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that cry for a knife or dagger, and are pleas'd as well with a bone knife, and wooden dagger, as with the best of all? so they have some armour, it matters not what. Pray they must, but little care how it be performed. Believe in God? yes, they hope they are not infidels: but what it is, how they come by it, or whether it will hold in an evil day, this never was put to the question in their hearts. Thus thousands perish with a vain conceit, they are arm'd against Satan, death and judgment, when they are *miserable and naked*, yea, worse on it then those who are more naked, (those I mean) who have not a rag of civility, to hide their shame from the worlds eye; and that in a double respect.

1. First, it is harder to work on such a soul savingly, because he hath a forme, though not the power, and this affords him a plea. A soule purely naked, nothing like the wedding garment on, he is speechlesse; the drunkard hath nothing to say for himself; when you ask him why he lives so swinishly; you may come up to him, and get within him, and turne the very mouth of his conscience upon him, which will shoot conviction into him: But come to deal with one that prayes and heares, one that is a pretender to faith and hope in God, here is a man in glittering armour, he hath his weapon in his hand, with which he will keep the Preacher, and the Word he chargeth him with at armes length. Who can say, I am not a Saint? what duty do I neglect? here's a breast-work he lies under, which makes him not so faire a mark either to the observation or reproof of another, his chief defect being within, where mans eye comes not. Again, 'tis harder to work on him, because he hath been tamper'd with already, and miscarried in the essay. How comes such a one to be acquainted with such duties, to make such a profession? was it ever thus? No, the Word hath been at work upon him, his conscience hath scared him from his trade of wickednesse into a forme of Profession, but taking in short of Christ, for want of a through change, it is harder to remove him then the other: he is like a lock whose wards have been troubled; which makes it harder to turne the Key, then if never potter'd with. 'Tis better dealing with a wilde ragged colt, never back't, then one that in breaking hath took a wrong stroak. A bone quite out of joynt then false set. In a word, such a one hath more to deny then a pro-

profane perſon; the one hath but his luſts, his whores, his ſwilt and drafte; but the other hath his duties, his ſeeming graces. Ohowhard is it to perſwade ſuch a one to light, and hold Chriſt ſtirrup, while he and his duties are made Chriſts foot-ſtool.

Secondly, ſuch a one is deepeſt in condemnation. None ſink ſo far into hell as thoſe that come neareſt heaven, becauſe they fall from the greateſt height. As it aggravates the torments of damned ſouls in this reſpect above devils, they had a cord of mercy thrown out to them, which devils had not: ſo by how much God by his Spirit waits on, pleads with, and ly both gains on a ſoul more then others ly ſo much ſuch a one (if he periſh) will finde hell the hotter: theſe adde to his ſin, and the remembrance of his ſin in hell thus accented will adde to his torment. None will have ſuch a ſad parting from Chriſt, as thoſe who went half-way with him, and then left him.

Therefore (I beſeech you) look to your armour. *David* would not fight in armour, he had not tried though it was a kings; perhaps ſome thought him too nice: What? is not the Kings armour good enough for *David*? Thus many will ſay, Art thou ſo curious and precise? ſuch a great man doth thus and thus, and hopes to come to heaven at laſt, and dareſt not thou venture thy ſoule in his armour? No, Chriſtian, follow not the example of the greateſt on earth; 'tis thy own ſoul thou ventuereſt in battel, therefore thou canſt not be too choiſe of thy armour. Pring thy heart to the Word, as the onely touch-ſtone of thy grace and furniture the Word (I told you) is the *Tower of David*, from whence thy armour muſt be fetch't, if thou canſt finde this Tower ſtamp on it, then 'tis of God, elſe not. Try it therefore ly this one Scripture-ſtamp. Thoſe weapons are mighty, which God gives his Saints to fight his battels withal, 2 Cor. 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.* The ſword of the Spirit hath its point and edge, whereby it makes its way into the heart and conſcience, through the impenitency of the one, and ſtupidity of the other; (wherewith Satan, as with buff and coat of male, armes the ſinner againſt God) and there cuts and ſlaſhes, kills and mortifies luſt in its own Caſtle, where Satan thinks himſelf impregnable. The Breſt-plate which is of God, doth not bend and break at every pat of

temptation, but is of such a divine temperament, that it repels Satans motions with scorn on Satans teeth. Should such a one as I sin, as *Nebemiah* in another case? and such are all the rest. Now try whether your weapons be mighty or weak: what can you do or suffer more for God, then an hypocrite that is clad in fleshly armour? I'll tell you what the world saith, and if you be Christians, clear your selves, and wipe off that dirt which they throw upon your glistering armour: they say, Their Professors indeed have God more in their talk then we, they are oftner in the mount of duty then we, but when they come down into their shops, relations and worldly employment, then the best of them all is but like one of us; they can throw the Tables of Gods commandments out of their hands as well as we, come from a Sermon, and be as covetous and griping, as peevish and passionate as the worst; they shew as little love to Christ as others, when it is matter of cost, as to relieve a poore Sainr, or maintain the Gospel, you may get more from a stranger, an enemy, then from a professing brother. O Christians, either vindicate the Name of Christ, whose Ensign you seem to march after, or throw away your seeming armour, by which you have drawn the eyes of the world upon you. If you will not, Christ himselfe will cashier you, and that with shame enough ere long. Never call that Armour of God, which defends thee not against the power of Satan. Take therefore the severall pieces of your armour, and try them, as the souldier before he fights, will set his helmet or head-piece, as a mark at which he lets flie a brace of bullets, and as he findes them so will weare them or leave them; but be sure thou shootest Scripture-bullets. Thou boastest of a breast-plate of righteousness, ask thy soul, Didst thou ever in thy life perform a duty to please God, and not to accommodate thyself? Thou hast prayed often against thy sin, a great noise of these pieces have been heard coming from thee by others, as if there were some hot fight between thee and thy corruption, but canst thou indeed shew one sin thou hast slain by all thy praying? *Joseph* was alive, though his coat was brought bloodly to *Jacob*, and so may thy sin be for all thy mortified look in duty, and our cry thou makest against them. If thou wouldest thus try every piece, thy credulous heart would not so easily be cheated with Satans false ware.

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But is all armour that is of God thus mighty? we reade of *Obj.*
weak grace, little faith, how can this then be a trial of our armour
whether of God or not?

Answer, the weaknesse of grace is in respect of stronger grace, *Ans.*
but that weak grace is strong and mighty in comparison of counter-
feit grace: Now I do not bid thee try the truth of thy grace by
such a power as is peculiar to stronger grace, but by that pow-
er which will distinguish it from false; true grace, when weak-
est, is stronger then false when strongest. There is a principle of
divine life in it, which the other hath not; Now life, as it gives
excellency (a flea or fly by reason of its life, is more excellent then
the Son in all his glory) so it gives strength. The slow motion of
a living man (though so feeble that he cannot go a furlong in a
day) yet coming from life: imports more strength then is in a
ship, which (though it sailes swiftly) hath its motion from with-
out: Thus possibly an hypocrite may exceed the true Christian in
the bulk and out-side of a duty, yet because his strength is not
from life, but from some winde and tide abroad that carries him,
and the Christians is from an inward principle, therefore the
Christians weaknesse is stronger then the hypocrite in his greatest
enlargements. I shall name but two acts of grace when weak-
est, whereby the Christian exceeds the hypocrite in all his best
array. You will say, then grace is at a weak stay indeed, when
the Christian is perswaded to commit a sin, a great sin, such a one
as possibly a carnal person would not have it said of him for a
great matter, so low may the tide of grace fall, yet true grace
at such an ebbe will appear of greater strength and force then
the other.

First, this principle of grace will never leave till the soule
weeps bitterly with *Peter*, that it hath offended so good a God.
Speak, O ye hypocrites, can ye shew one tear that ever you shed
in earnest for a wrong done to God? Possibly ye may weep to see
the bed of sorrow which your sins are making for you in hell,
but ye never loved God so well, as to mourn for the injury ye
have done the Name of God. It is a good glosse *Augustine* hath
upon *Esau's* teares, *Heb. 12. Flevit quod perdidit, non quod ven-*
didit. He wept that he lost the blessing, not that he sold it. Thus
we see an excellency of the Saints sorrow above the hypocrites.
The Christian by his sorrow shews himself a Conquerour of that
sin,

fin, which even now overcame him, while the hypocrite by his pride shews himself a slave to a worse lust, then that he resists. While the Christian commits a sin he hates it; whereas the other loves it while he forbears it.

2. Secondly, when true grace is under the foot of a temptation, yet then it will stir up in the heart a vehement desire of revenge; like a prisoner in his enemies hand, who is thinking and plotting how to get out, and what he will do when out, waiting and longing every moment for his delivery, that he may again take up armes; *O God, remember me, saith Samson, this once I pray thee, and strengthen me, that I may be at once avenged on the Philistines, for my two eyes,* Judg. 16. 27. Thus prays the gracious soul, that God would but spare him a little, and strengthen him but once before he dies, that he may be avenged on his pride, unbelief, and those sins whereby he hath most dishonoured his God? but a false heart is so far from studying revenge, that he rather swells, like the sea, against the Law which banks his lust in, and is angry with God who hath made sin such a leap, that he must hazard his soule if he will have it.



CHAP. IV.

Of the entirenesse of our furniture, It must be the whole Armour of God.

3. **T**He third Branch in the Saints furniture is, the entirenesse thereof, *The whole Armour of God.* The Christians Armour must be compleat, and that in a threefold respect.

SECT. I.

1. First, he must be armed in every part *cap-a-pe*, soule and body, the powers

powers of the one, and senses of the other, not any part left naked. A dart may fly in at a little hole, (like that which brought a message of death to *Abab*, though the joynts of his harness) and Satan is such an Archer, who can shoot at a penny breadth. If all the man be armed, and only the eye left with out, Satan can soon shoot his fire-balls of lust in at that loop-hole, which shall set the whole house on flame. *Eve* look't but on the tree, and a poisonous dart struck her to the heart. If the eye be shut, and the ear be open to corrupt communication, Satan will soon wriggle in at this hole; If all the outward senses be guarded, and the heart not kept with all diligence, he will soon by his own thoughts be betrayed into Satans hands. Our enemies are on every side, and so must our armour be, *on the right hand and on the left*, 2 Cor. 6. 7. The Apostle calls *ἡμαρτίαν περιεσπαστον*, an enemy that surrounds us. If there be any part of the line unguarded or weakly provided, there Satan falls on; we see the enemy often enter the city at one side, while he is beat back on the other, for want of care to keep the whole line. Satan divides his temptations into several squadrons, one he employes to assault here, another to storm there. We read of fleshly wickedness and spiritual wickedness; while thou repellst Satan tempting thee to fleshly wickedness, he may be entering thy city at the other gate of spiritual wickedness. Perhaps thou hast kept thy integrity in the practical part of thy life; but what armour hast thou to defend thy head, thy judgement? If he surprise thee here, corrupting that with some error, then thou wilt not long hold out in thy practice. He that could not get thee to profane the Sabbath among Sensualists and Atheists, will under the disguise of such a corrupt principle as Christian liberty prevail. Thus we see what need we have of universal armour, in regard of every part.

Heb. 12. 18

SECT. II.

Secondly, the Christian must be in compleat armour, in regard of the several pieces and weapons, that make up the whole Armour of God. Indeed there is a concatenation of graces, they

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hang together like links in a chain, stones in any arch, members in the body; prick one vein, and the blood of the whole body may run out at that sluice; neglect one duty, and no other will dous good. The Apostle Peter, in his *second Epistle, chap. 1. ver. 5, 6, 7.* presseth the Christian to a joynt endeavour, to encrease the whole body of grace; indeed, that is health when the whole body thrives. *Adde* (saith he) *to your faith vertue;* Faith is the file-leading grace. Well, hast thou faith, adde vertue: True, faith is of a working stirring nature; without good works it is dead or dying. *Fides pinguescit operibus, Luther.* 'Tis kept in plight and heart by a holy life, as the flesh which plaisters over the frame of mans body, though it receives its heat from the vitals within, yet helps to preserve the very life of those vitals; thus good works and gracious actions have their life from faith, yet are necessary helps to preserve the life of faith; thus we see sometimes the child nursing the Parents that bare it, and therein performes but his duty. Thou art fruitful in good works, yet thou art not out of the devils shoot, except thou addest to thy *vertue knowledge.* This is the candle without which faith cannot see to do its work. Art thou going to give an almes? if it be not *oculata charitas*, if charity hath not this eye of knowledge to direct when, how, what, and to whom thou art to give, thou mayest at once wrong God, the person thou relievest, and thy self. Art thou humbling thy selfe for thy sin? for want of knowledge in the tenour of the Gospel, Satan may play upon thy ignorance, and either perswade thee thou art not humbled enough, when, God knowes, thou art almost quackled with thy teares, and even carried down by the impetuous torrent of thy sorrow into despair, or else shewing thee thy blubber'd face, may flatter thee into a carnal confidence of thy humiliation. Perhaps thou feelt the Name of God dishonoured in the place where thou livest, and thy spirit is stirred within thee, (as Pauls at Athens) now if knowledge fits not in the saddle to reine and bridle in thy zeal, thou wilt be soon carried over hedge and ditch, till thou fallest into some precipice or other by thy irregular acting. Neither is knowledge enough, except thou beest arm'd with *Temperance*, which here (I conceive) is that grace, whereby the Christian (as Master of his own house) so orders his affections (like servants to reason and faith,) that they

Put on the whole Armour of God. 75

they do not irregularly move, or inordinately lash out into desires of, cares for, or joy in the creature comforts of this life, without which Satan will be too hard for thee. The Historian tells us, that in one of the famous battels between the *English* and *French*, that which lost the *French* the day was a shower of *English* arrows, which did so gall their horse, as put the whole army into disorder, their horse knowing no ranks, did tread down their own men: The affections are but as the horse to the Rider, on which knowledge should be mounted, if Satans barbed arrows light on them, so that thy desires of the creature prove unruly, and juggle with thy desires of Christ, thy care to keep thy credit or estate, put thy care to keep a good conscience to disorder, and thy carnal joy in wife and child trample down, or get before thy joy in the Lord, judge on which side victory is like to fall, well, suppose thou marchest provided thus far in goodly aray towards heaven, while thou art swimming in prosperity, must thou not also prepare for foule way & weather, I mean an afflicted estate? Satan will line the hedges with a thousand temptations, when thou comest into the narrow lanes of adversity, where thou canst not run from this sort of temptation, as in the Champaigne of prosperity: Possibly, thou that didst escape the snare of an alluring world, mayst be dismounted by the same when it frowns, though temperance kept thee from being drunk with the sweet wines of those pleasures, yet for want of patience thou mayest be drunk with the wine of astonishment, which is in afflictions hand: therefore, saith the Apostle, *to temperance adde patience*; either possesse thy selfe in patience or else some raving devil of discontent will possesse thee. An impatient soul in affliction is a bedlam in chains, yea, too like the devil in his chaines, that rageth against God, while he is fettered by him. Well, hast thou patience? an excellent grace indeed, but not enough; thou must be a pious man as well as a patient. Therefore saith the Apostle, *to patience? adde godlinesse*. There is an atheisticall stupid patience, And there is a godly Christian patience: Satan numbs the conscience of the one, and no wonder he complains not, that feels not; but the spirit of Christ sweetly calmes the other, not by taking away the sense of paine, but by overcoming it with the sense of his love. Now godlinesse comprehends the whole worship of God, inward and outward.

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If thou beest never so exact in thy morralls, & not a worshipper of God, then thou art an Atheist. If thou doest worship God, and that devoutly, but not by scripture-rule, thou art but idolater. If according to the rule, but not in Spirit and truth, then thou art an hypocrite, and so fallest into the devils mouth. Or if thou dost give God one piece of his worship, and denyest another still Satan comes to his market. *Prov. 28. 9. He that turneth back his ear from hearing the Law, his prayer is an abomination to the Lord.* Yet (Christian) all thy Armour is not on. Thy godlines indeed would suffice, wert thou to live in a world by thy self, or hadst nothing to do but immediate communion with God; But (Christian) thou must not alwayes dwell on this mount of immediate worship, and when thou descendest thou hast many brethren and servants of thy Fathers, who live with thee in the same family; and thou must comport thy self becomingly, or else thy Father will be angry. First, thou hast brethren, heires of the same promise with thee, therefore you must adde to godlinesse *brotherly kindnesse*. If Satan can set you at oddes, he gives a deep wound to your godlinesse. You will hardly joyn hearts in a duty, that cannot joyn hands in love. Secondly, they are not only brethren, but servants, a multitude of profane carnal ones, who though they never had the names of sons and daughters, yet retain to Gods family, and thy heavenly Father will have thee walk unblameably, yea winningly to those that are without, which that thou mayest do, thou must adde to brotherly kindnesse *charity*; by which grace thou shalt be willing to doe good to the worst of men; when they curse thee, thou must pray for them, yea, pray for no lesse then a Christ, a heaven for them. *Father forgive them*, said Christ, while they were raking in his side for his heart blood. And truly, I am perswaded the want of this last piece of armour, hath given Satan great advantage in these our times. We are so afraid our charity should be too broad, whereas in this sense, if it be not as wide as the world, it is too strait for the command which bids us *do good to all*. May not we ministers be charged with the want of this? when the strain of our preaching is solely directed to the Saints; and no paines taken in rescuing poore captived soules, yet uncall'd out of the devils clutches, who may hale them to hell without any disturbance, while

while we are comforting the Saints, and preaching their privileges; but in the meantime let the ignorant be ignorant still, and the profane profane still, for want of a compassionate charity to their souls, which would excite us to the reproving and exhorting of them, that they might also be brought into the way of life, as well as the Saints encouraged, who are walking therein. We are stewards to provide bread for the Lords house; the greatest part of our hearers cannot, must not have the childrens bread, and shall we therefore give them no portion at all? Christs charity pitied the multitude, to whom in his publick preaching he made special application, as in that famous Sermon, most part of which is spent in rowling up the sleepy consciences of the hypocritical Pharisees, by those thunderclaps of woes and curses, so often denounced against them, *Mat. 23*. Again, how great advantage hath Satan from the want of this charity in our families? Is it not observ'd, how little care is taken by professing Governours of such Societies, for the instructing their youth? Nay, it is a principle which some have drunk in, that 'tis not their duty. O where is their charity in the mean time, when they can see Satan come within their own walls, and let him drive a child, a servant in their ignorance and profaness to hell, and not so much as fall out upon this enemy by a word of reproof or instruction, to rescue these silly souls out of the murderers hand? We must leave them to their liberty forsooth, and that is as faire play as we can give the devil; give but corrupt nature enough of this rope, and it will soon strangle the very principles of God and Religion in their tender yeares.

SECT. III.

Thirdly, the entirenesse of the Saints armour may be taken not only for every part and piece of the Saints furniture, but for the compleatnesse and perfection of every piece. As the Christian is to endeavour after every grace, so is he to presse after the advance and increase of every grace, even to perfection it self; as he is to adde to his faith vertue, so he is to adde faith

3.

to faith; he is ever to be compleating of his grace. It is that which is frequently prest upon believers, *Mat. 5. 48. Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. And purifie your selves, as God is pure.* Where we have an exact copy set, not as if we could equallize that purity and perfection which is in God, but to make us strive the more, when we shall see how infinitely short we fall of our copy, when we write the fairest hand. So *James 1. 3. Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be entire, want nothing, or wanting in nothing.* Thou who makest a hard shift to carry a little burden with thy little patience wouldst sink under a greater, therefore there is need that patience, should be ever perfecting, lest at last we meet a burden too heavy for our weak shoulders. Take a few reasons why the Christian should thus be compleating of his grace.

1.

First, because grace is subject to decays, and therefore ever needs compleating, as in an army especially which often engageth in battel, their armes is tatter'd and broken, one man hath his helmet bent, another his sword gap't, a third his pistoll unfix't; and therefore recruits are ever necessary. In one temptation the Christian hath his helmet of hope beaten off his head, in another his patience hard put to it. The Christian had need have an Armourers shop at hand to make up his losse, and that speedily, for Satan is most like to fall on, when the Christian is least prepared to receive his charge; *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to sift you;* he knew they were at that time weakly provided, (Christ their Captain now to be taken from the head of their troop, discontents among themselves, striving, who should be greatest, and their recruits of stronger grace, which the Spirit was to bring, not yet come.) Now he hath a design to surprise them: and therefore Christ carefully to prevent him, promieth speedily to dispatch his Spirit for their supply, and in the mean time sends them to *Jerusalem*, to stand as it were in a body in their joynt supplications, upon their guard, while he comes to their relief, shewing us in the weaknesse of our grace what to do, and whither to go for supply.

Acts 1. 4.

2.

Secondly, because Satan is compleating his skill and wrath. 'Tis not for nought that he is call'd the old Serpent, subtil by nature, but more by experience; wrathful by nature, yet every day more and more enraged; like a bull, the longer he is baited

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ed, the more fury he shewes. And therefore we who are to grapple with him, now his time is so short, had need come well appointed into the field.

Thirdly, it is the end of all Gods dispensations, to compleat his Saints in their graces and comforts. Wherefore doth he lop ^{3.} and prune by afflictions, but to purge, *that they may bring forth more fruit* (that is, fuller and fairer? *Tribulation works patience,* ^{Joh. 15. 2.} 'Tis Gods appointment for that end: *It works,* that is, it increaseth the Saints. Patience it inrageth indeed the wicked: but meekens the Saints. 'Tis his designe in the Gospel preacheth to carry on his Saints, *from faith to faith,* ^{Rom. 5. 3.} accordingly he hath furnished his Church with instruments, and those with gifts, *for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ,* Eph. 4. 14. Wherefore doth the Scaffold stand, and the Workman on it, if the building go not up? For us not to advance under such meanes: is to make void the counsel of God: Therefore the Apostle blames the Christian Jewes, *Heb. 5. 12.* for their non-proficiency in the School of Christ. *When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the Oracles of God.*

O how few are there who endeavour thus to promote in their spir'itual state, and labour to perfect what is yet lacking in their knowledge, patience, and the rest. First, tell some of adding ^{use} faith to faith, one degree of grace to another, and you shall finde they have more mind to joyne house to house, and lay field to field; their soules are a thirist, ever gaping for more, but of what? not of Christ, or Heaven: It is earth, earth they never think they have enough of, till death comes and stops their mouth with a shovel-full, digg'd out of their own grave. What a tormenting life must they needs have, who are alwayes crying for more weight, and yet cannot presse their covetous desires to death? O Sirs, the only way, (If men would beleve it) to quench this thirst to the creature, were to enkindle another after Christ and Heaven. Get but a large heart vehemently thirsting after these, and the other will die alone. As the Feavourish thirst doth when nature comes to her temper. Secondly, others labour not thus to perfect grace, because they have a conceit they are perfect already, and upon this fancy throw away praying, hearing, and

and all other Ordinances, as strings for those babes in grace, to be carried by, who are not arrived to their high attainments: O what fools does pride make men! Truly Heaven were no such desirable place, if we should be no more perfect, then, thus: a sort of people that are too high for this world, & too low for another. The way by which God cures this phrensie of pride, we have in these days seen to be something like that of *Nebuchadnezzar*, To give them a heart of a beast, (I mean) for a time, suffer them to fall into beastly practices, by which he shewes them how far they are from that perfection they dreamed of so vainly. Thirdly, others who have true grace, and desire the advancement of it, yet are discouraged in their endeavour for more, from too deep a sense of their present penury. Bid some such labour to get more power of corruption, more faith on, and love to God, that they may be able to do the Will of God cheerfully, and suffer it in the greatest afflictions patiently, yea, thankfully; and they will never believe, that they whose faith is so weak, love so chill, & stock so little in hand, should ever attain to any thing like such a pitch: You may as well perswade a Beggar with one poor penny in his purse, that if he shall go and trade with that, he shall come to be Lord *Major of London* before he die: But why, poor hearts, should you thus despise the day of small things? Do you not see a little grain of Mustard-seed spread into a tree, and weak grace compar'd to it, for it growth at last as well as littleness at first? Darest thou say thou hast no grace at all? If thou hast but any, (though the least that ever any had to begin with) I dare tell thee, that he hath done more for thee in that, then he should in making that which is now so weak, as perfect as the Saints grace is now in heaven. First, he hath done more, considering it as an act of Power. There is a greater gulf between no grace & grace, then between weak grace and strong, between a *Chaos* and nothing, then between a *Chaos* and this beautifull frame of heaven and earth. The first days work of both Creations is the greatest. Secondly, consider it as an act of grace, it is greater mercy to give the first grace of conversion, then to crown that with glory. It is more grace and condescence in a Prince to marry a poor Damosel, then having married her to cloth her like a Prince; he was free to do the first or not, but his relation to her pleads strongly for the other. God might have

have chose whether he would have given thee grace or no, but having done this, thy relation to him and his covenant also do oblige him, to adde more and more till he hath fitted thee as a Bride for himselfe in glory.



CHAP. V.

Of the use of our spiritual Armour, or the exercise of grace.

THe fourth and last branch in the Saints furniture is, the use they are to make thereof *ἐν δύσασι τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ*: Put on the whole Armour of God. Briefly what is this duty, put on? These being Saints, (many of them at least) he writes to, 'tis not only putting on by Conversation, what some of them might not yet have; but also, he means they should exercise what they have. It is one thing to have armour in the house, and another thing to have it buckled on: to have grace in the principle, and grace in the act; so that the instruction will be.

It is not enough to have grace, but this grace must be kept in exercise. The Christians Armour is made to be worne; no laying down, or putting off our Armour, till we have done our warfare, and finished our course. Our Armour, and our garment of flesh go off together; then indeed will be no need of watch and ward, shield or helmet. Those military duties and field-graces, (as I may call faith, hope, and the rest) they shall be honourably discharged. In heaven we shall appear, not in armour, but in robes of glory; but here they are to be worne night and day: we must walk, work, and sleep in them, or else we are not true souldiers of Christ: this Paul professeth to endeavour, *Acts 24. 16. Herein do I exercise my self, to have alwayes a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.* Here we have this holy man at his armes, training and exercising himself

in his postures, like some souldier by himself handling his pike, and inuring himselfe before the battel. Now the Reason of this is.

SECT. I.

First, Christ commands us to have our Armour on, our grace in exercise, *Luke 12. 35. Let you loines be girded about, and your lights burning.* Christ speaks, either in a martial phrase, as to souldiers, or in a domestick as to servants: If as to souldiers, then let your loynes be girded, and your lights burning, is, that we should be ready for a march, having our armour on, (for the belt goes over all,) and our match light, ready to give fire at the first alarm of a temptation. If as to servants, which seems more natural, then he bids us (as our Master that is gone abroad) not through sloth or sleep put off our clothes, and put out our lights, but stand ready to open when he shall come, though at midnight. 'Tis not fit the Master should stand at the door knocking, and the servant within sleeping; indeed there is no duty the Christian hath in charge, but implies this daily exercise; *Pray, but how? without ceasing: Rejoyce, but when? evermore: Give thanks, for what? in every thing.* The shield of faith, and helmet of hope, we must hold them to the end. The summe of all which is, that we should walk in the constant exercise of these duties and graces. Where the souldier is plac'd, there he stands, and must neither stir nor sleep, till he be brought off. When Christ comes, that soule shall on'y have his blessing, whom he findes so doing.

Secondly, Satans advantage is great when grace is not in exercise. When the devil found Christ so ready to receive his charge, and repel his temptation, he soon had enough, it is said, *He departed for a season*, as if in his shameful retreat he had comforted himself with hopes of surprising Christ unawares, at another season more advantageous to his design; and we finde him coming again, in the most likely time indeed to have attained his end, had his enemy been man, and not God. Now if this bold fiend did thus watch and observe Christ from time to time,

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time, doth it not behove thee to look about thee, lest he take thy grace at one time or other napping? what he misseth now by thy watchfulnesse, he may gain anon by thy negligence. Indeed he hopes thou wilt be tired out with continual duty: Surely, saith Satan, (when he sees the Christian up, and fervent in duty) this will not hold long. When he findes him tender of conscience, and scrupulous of occasions to sin, This is but for a while, ere long I shall have him unbend his bowe, and unbuckle his armour, and then have at him. Satan knows what orders thou keepest in thy house and closet, and though he hath not a key to thy heart, yet he can stand in the next room to it, and lightly hear what is whispered there. He hunts the Christian by the sent of his own feet, and if once he doth but smell which way thy heart enclines, he knows how to take the hint; if but one door be unbolted, one work unmann'd, one grace of its carriage, here is advantage enough.

Thirdly, because it is so awky a businesse, and hard a work, to recover the activity of grace once lost, and to revive a duty in disuse: *I have put off my coat*, saith the Spouse, *Cant. 5. 3.* She had given way to a lazy distemper, was laid upon her bed of sloth, and how hard is it to raise her? her beloved is at the door, beseeching her by all the names of love, which might bring to her remembrance the near relation between them: *My sister, my Love, my Dove, open to me*, and yet she riseth not; he tells her, *his locks are filled with the drops of the night*; yet she stirs not. What is the matter? her coat was off, and she is loath to put it on; she had given way to her sloth, and now she knows not how to shake it off, she could have been glad to have her Beloveds company, if himself would have opened the door; and he desired as much hers, if she would rise to let him in; and upon these termes they part. The longer a soule hath neglected duty, the more ado there is to get it taken up: partly through shame, the soul having played the truant, now knows not how to look God on the face; and partly from the difficulty of the work, being double to what another findes, that walks in the exercise of his grace; here is all out of order. It requires more time and pains for him to tune his instrument, then for another to play the lesson. He goes to duty as to a new work, as a Scholar that hath not look't on his book some while, his lesson is al-

3.

most out of his head, whereas another that was but even now conning it over, hath it *ad unguem*. Perhaps 'tis an affliction thou art called to bear, and thy patience unexercised, little or no thoughts thou hast had for such a time; (whils thou wert frisking in a full pasture,) and now thou kickest and flingest, even as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, Jer. 31. 18. whereas another goes meekly and patiently under the like crosse, because he had been stirring up his patience, and fitting the yoke to his neck. You know what a confusion there is in a town, at some sudden alarm in the dead of the night, the enemy at the gates, and they asleep within, O what a cry is there heard! one wants his clothes, another his sword, a third knows not what to do for powder; thus in a fright they run up and down, which would not be, if the enemy did finde them upon their guard, orderly waiting for his approach; Such a hubbub there is in a soule that keeps not his armour on, this piece and that will be to seek when he should use it.

4. Fourthly, we must keep grace in exercise in respect of others our fellow-souldiers. *Paul* had this in his eye when he was exercising himself to keep a good conscience, that he might not be a scandal to others. The Cowardise of one may make others run; the ignorance of one souldier that hath not skill to handle his armes, may do mischeif to his fellow-souldiers about him; some have shot their friends for their enemies; the unwise walking of one Professor makes many others faire the worse. But say, thou doest not fall so far as to become a scandal, yet thou canst not be so helpful to thy fellow-brethren as thou shouldst; God commanded the *Rabinites and Gadites* to go before their brethren ready armed, until the land was conquered: Thus, Christian, thou art to be helpful to thy fellow-brethren, who have not (it may be) that settlement of Peace in their spirit as thy self, not that measure of grace or comfort; Thou art to help such weak ones, and go before them (as it were) arm'd for their defence; now if thy grace be not exercised, thou art so far unserviceable to thy weak brother. Perhaps thou art a Master or a Parent who hast a family under thy wing, they fare as thou thrive; if thy heart be in a holy frame they fare the better in the duties thou performest, if thy heart be dead and down, they are losers by the hand. So that as the Nurse eats the more
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for the Babes sake the suckles, so shouldst thou for their sake, who are under thy tuition, be more careful to exercise thy own grace, and cherish it.

SECT. 2.

O but (may some say) this is hard work indeed, our armour never off, our grace alwayes in exercise. Did God ever mean Religion should be such a toilsome businesse as this would make it? *Obj.*

Thou speakest like one of the foolish world, and shewest thy self a meer stranger to the Christians life that speakest thus: a burden to exercise grace? why? it is no burden to exercise the acts of nature, to eat, to drink, to walk, all delightful to us in our right temper, if any of these be otherwise, nature is oppress'd, as if stuff't, then difficult to breath, if sick, then the most offensive we eate; so take a Saint in his right temper, 'tis his joy to be employed in the exercise of his grace in this or that duty, *Pf. 122. 1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.* His heart leapt at the motion. When any occasion diverts him from communion with God, though he likes it never so well, yet it is unwelcome and unpleasing to him, as you who are used to be in your shops from morning to night, how tedious is it for you to be abroad some days, though among good freinds, because you are not where your work and calling lies? A Christian in duty is one in his calling, as it were in his shop where he should be; yea, where he would be, and therefore far from being tedious. Religion is burdensome to none, as to those who are infrequent in the exercise of it. Use makes heavy things light, we hardly feel the weight of our clothes, because fitted to us, and worn daily by us, whereas the same weight on our shoulder would trouble us: thus the grievousnesse of religious duties to carnal ones, is taken away in the Saints, partly by the fitnessse of them to the Saints principles, as also by their daily exercise in them. The disciples, when newly entered into the wayes of Christ, could not pray much or fast long; the bottles

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were new, and that wine too strong, but by that time they had walk't a few yeares, they grew mighty in both; doest thou complain that heaven-way is rugged? be the oftener walking in it, and that will make it smooth.

2. But secondly, were this constant exercise of grace more troublesome to the flesh, (which is the only complainer) the sweet advantage that accrues by this to the Christian, will abundantly recompence all his labour and pains.

1. First, the exercise of thy grace will increase thy grace; *The diligent hand makes rich.* A provident man counts that lost which might have been got, not only when his money is stole out of his chest, but when it lies there unimproved. Such a commodity (saith the Tradesman) if I had bought with that money in my bags, would have brought me in so much gaine, which is now lost; so the Christian may say, My dawning knowledge, had I followed on to know the Lord, might have spread to broad day; *I have more understanding,* saith David, *then all my teachers.* How came he by it? he'll tell you in the next words, *for thy testimonies are my meditation.* He was more in the exercise of duty and grace. The best wits are not alwayes the greatest Scholars, because their study is not suitable to their parts; neither alwayes proves he the richest man, that sets up with the greatest stock. A little grace well husbanded by daily exercise will encrease, when greater neglected shall decay.

Pl. 119 99

2. Secondly, as exercise encreaseth, so it evidenceth grace. Would a man know whether he be lame or no, let him rise, he'll be sooner satisfied by one turne in a room, then by along dispute, and he sit still. Wouldst thou know whether thou lovest God? be frequent in exorting acts of love; the more the fire is blown up, the sooner 'tis seen, and so of all other graces. Sometimes the soule is questioning whether it hath any patience, any faith; till God comes and puts him into an afflicted estate, (where he must either exercise this grace or perish) and then it appears like one that thinks he cannot swim, yet being thrown into the river, then uniting all his strength, he makes a shift to swim to land, and sees what he can do. How oft have we heard Christians say, *I thought I could never have indured such a pain,* trusted God in such a strait, but now God hath taught me what he can do for me, what he hath wrought in me? and this thou might.

mightst have known before, if thou wouldest have oftner stirred up and exercised thy grace.

Thirdly, exercise of grace doth invite God to communicate himself to such a soul. God sets the Christian at work, and then meets him in it. *Up and be doing, and the Lord be with you.* He sets a soul a reading as the Eunuch, and then joynes to his chariot a praying, and then comes the messenger from heaven, *O Daniel, greatly beloved.* The Spouse, who lost her Beloved on her bed, findes him as she comes from the Sermon, *Cant. 3. 4. It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soule loved.*

3.

SECT. 3.

This falls heavy on their heads, who are so far from exercising grace, that they walk in the exercise of their lusts, their hearts are like a glasse house, the fire is never out, the shop-windows never shut, they are alwayes at work, hammering some wicked project or other, upon the anvil of their hearts; there are some who give full scope to their lusts, what their wretched hearts will, they shall have; they cocker their lusts as some their children, deny them nothing, who (as it is recorded of David to Adonijah,) do not so much as say to their soules, Why dost thou so? why art thou so proud, so covetous, so prophane? They spend their dayes in making provision for these guests: as at some Inns, the house never cooles, but as one guest goes out another comes in, as one lust is served, another is calling for attendance; as some exercise grace more then others, so there are greater traders in sin, that set more a work then others, and return more wrath in a day then others in a moneth; Happy are such (in comparison of these) who are chain'd up by Gods restraint upon their outward man or inward, that they cannot drive on so furiously as these, who by health of body, power and greatnesse in place, riches and treasures in their coffers, numbnesse and dedolency in their consciences, are hurried on to fill up the measure of their sins. We read of the Assyrian, that he enlarged *his heart as bell*, stretching out his desires as men do their bags that are thrack't.

Use 1.

thrack't full with money to hold more, *Hab. 2. 5.* Thus the adulterer, as if his body were not quick enough to execute the commands of his lust, stirs it up by sending forth his amorous glances, which come home laden with adultery, blows up this fire with unchaste sonnets and belly-chear, proper fuel for the devils kitchen; and the malicious man, who that he may lose no time from his lust, is a tearing his neighbour in pieces as he lies on his bed, cannot sleep unless some such bloody sacrifice be offered to his ravining lust. O how may this shame the Saints: how oft is your zeal so hot, that you cannot sleep till your hearts have been in heaven, as you are on your beds, and there pacified with the sight of your dear Saviour, and some embraces of love from him?

Use 2.

It reproves those who flout and mock at the Saints, while exercising their graces. None jeer'd as the Saint in his calling. Men may work in their shops, and every one follows his calling as diligently as they please; and no wonder made of this by those that passe by in the streets; but let the Christian be seene at work for God, in the exercise of any duty or grace, and he is hooted at, despised, yea, hated. Few so bad indeed, but seem to like Religion in the notion; they can commend a Sermon of holiness like a discourse of God or Christ in the Pulpit, but when these are really set before their eyes, as they sparkle in a Saints conversation, they are very contemptible and hateful to them; this living and walking holiness bites; and though they like the Preachers Art, in painting forth the same in his discourse, yet now they run from them, and spit at them? this exercise of grace offends the prophane heart, and stir up the enmity that lies within: As *Michal* she could not but flout *David* to see him dancing before the Ark. He that commended the Preacher for making a learned discourse of zeal, will raile on a Saint, expressing an act of zeal in his place and calling; now grace comes too neer him. A naughty heart must stand at some distance from holiness, that the beams thereof may not beat too strongly on his conscience, and so he likes it. Thus the Pharisees, the Prophets of old, these were holy men in their account, and they can lavish out their money on their Tombs, in honour of them: but Christ, (who was more worth then all of them) he is scorn'd and hated: what's the mystery of this? the reason was these Prophets

Put on the whole Armour of God. 89

phets are off the stage, and Christ on. *Pascitur in vivis liver, post fata quiescit.*

Try by this whether you have grace or no, dost thou walk in the exercise of thy grace? He that hath clothes, surely will wear Use 3. them, and not be seen naked; men talk of their faith, repentance, love to God; these are precious graces, but why do they not let us see these walking abroad in their daily conversation? surely if such guests were in thy soul, they would look out sometimes at the window, and be seen abroad in this duty, and that holy action; grace is of a stirring nature, and not such a dead thing (like an image) which you may lock up in a chest, and none shall know what God your worship; no, grace will shew it self, it will walk with you into all places and companies, it will buy with you, and sell for you, it will have a hand in all your enterprizes, it will comfort you when you are sincere and faithful for God, and it will complain and chide you when you are otherwise; go to, stop its mouth, and heaven shall hear its voice, it will groan, mourne and strive, even as a living man when you would smother him. I'll as soon believe the man to be alive, that lies peaceably as he is nail'd up in his Coffin, without strife or bustle, as that thou hast grace, and never exercise it in any act of spiritual life. What man! hast thou grace, and carried so peaceably, as a fool to the stocks, by thy lust? Why hang'st thou there nail'd to thy lust? if thou hast grace, come down and we will believe it, but if thou beest such a tame slave, as to sit still under the command of lust thou deceivest thy self: Hast thou grace, and shew none of it in the condition thou art plac'd in? May be thou art rich; dost thou shew thy humility towards those that are beneath thee? dost thou shew a heavenly minde breathing after heaven more then earth? It may be thy heart is puff'd with thy estate, that thou look'st on the poor as creatures of some lower species then thy self, and disdainest them, and as for heaven thou thinkest not of it. Like that wicked Prince, that said, *He would lose his part in Paradise rather then in Paris.* Art thou poor, why dost not exercise grace in that condition? Art thou contented, diligent? may be in stead of contentation thou repinest, canst not see a faire lace on thy rich brothers cloth, but grudgest it in stead of concurring with Providence by diligence to supply thy wants, thou art ready to break through the

hedge into thy neighbours fat pasture, thus serving thy owne turne by a sin, rather then waiting for Gods Blessing on thy honest diligence; if so, be not angry we call thee by thy right name, or at least question whether we may stile thee Christian; whose carriage is so crosse to that sacred name, which is too holy to be writtten on a rotten post.

Use 4.

Be exhorted, O ye Saints of God, to walk in the exercise of grace. It is the Ministers duty with the continual reath of exhortation, and if need be, reproof, to keep this heavenly fire clean on the Saints Altar. Peter saw it necessary to have the bellows alwayes in his hands, 2 Pet. 1. 12. *I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth;* (that shall not take him off) as long as he is in this Tabernacle, he saith he will stir them up, and be putting them in remembrance, v. 13. There is a sleepey disease we are subject too in this life; Christ though he had roused up his disciples twice, yet takes them napping the third time. Either exercise thy grace, or Satan will act thy corruption, as one lucket goes down, the other riseth; there is a booy of sin within, which likely a malignant party watcheth for such a time to step into the saddle, and 'tis easier to keep them down then to pull them down: Thy time is short, and thy way long, thou hast best put on, least thou meanest to be overtaken with the night, before thou gettest within sight of thy Fathers house. How uncomfortable 'tis for a traveller in Heaven-road (above all other) to go potching in the dark, many can with aking hearts tell thee. And what hast thou here to minde like this? Are they worldly cares and pleasures? Is it wisdom to lay out so much cost on thy tenement, which thou art leaving, and forget what thou must carry with thee? Before the fruit of these be ripe which thou art now planting, thy self may be rotting in the grave. *Time is short*, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 29. *κατὰ τὸν χρόνον τοῦ κόσμου*. The world is near its Port, and therefore God hath contracted the sailes of mans life but a while, and there will not be a point to chuse, whether we had wives or not, riches or not, but there will be a vast difference between those that had grace, and those that had not; yea, between those that did drive a quick trade in the exercise thereof, & those that were more remisse; the one shall have an abundant entrance into glory, while

while the other shall suffer losse in much of his lading, which shall be cast over-board as merchandise that will bear no price in that heavenly country; yea while thou art here others shall fare the better by thy lively graces. Thy cheerfulness and activity in thy heavenly course, will help others that travel with thee; he is dul indeed that will not put on, when he sees so much metal for God in thee who leadest the way. Yea, thy grace will give a check to the sins of others, who never stand in such awe, as when grace comes forth and sits like a ruler in the gate, to be seen of all that passe by. The Swearers knows not such Majesty is present, when the Christian is mealy-mouth'd, and so goes on and feares no colours, whose grace had it but her dagger of zeal ready, and courage to draw it forth in a wise reproof, would make sin quit the place, and with shame run into its hole. *Job 29. 8. The young men saw me and hid themselves, the princes refrain'd talking, and laid their hand on their mouth.* And doth not God deserve the best service thou canst do him in thy generation? Did he give thee grace to lay it up in a dead stock, and none to be the better? or can you say that he is wanting to you in his love and mercy? are they not ever in exercise for your good? *Is the eye of providence ever shut?* No, *he slumbers not* that keeps thee, or is it one moment off thee? No *The eye of the Lord is upon the righteous*; He hath fixed it for ever, and with infinite delight pleaseth himself in the object. When was his eare shut, or his hand, either from receiving thy cries, or supplying thy wants? nay, doth not thy condition take up the thoughts of God, and are they any other then thoughts of peace, which he entertains? A few drops of this oyle will keep the wheel in motion.

*That ye may be able to stand against
the wiles of the devil.*



Hese words present us with the reason, why the Christian souldier is to be thus compleatly arm'd, *That he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil* The strength of which argument lies in these two particulars.

First, the danger, if unarm'd, the enemy is no mean contemptible one, no lesse then the devil, set out as a cunning Engineer by his wiles and stratagems.

Secondly, the certainty of standing against all his wits and wiles, if we be thus arm'd, that ye may be able to stand. As no standing without armour, so no feare of falling into the fiends hands if arm'd.

To begin with the first, the Saints enemy, the devil described by his wiles *μεθοδία το διαβολου*, properly the methods of Satan, *μεθοδία* of *μεθοδος*, which signifies, that Art and order one observes in handling a point; we say such a one is methodical; Now because it shews ingenuity and acutenesse of wit so to compose a discourse, therefore it is transferr'd to expresse the subtilty of Satan in laying off his plots and stratagems, in his warlike preparations against the Christian. Indeed, the expert souldier hath his order as well as the scholar, there is method in forming of an army, as well as framing an argument. The Note which lies before us is.

Doct.

The devil is a very subtile enemy. The Christian is endangered most by his policy and craft; he is call'd the old Serpent. The serpent? subtil above others creatures, an old Serpent above other serpents; Satan was too crafty for man in his perfection, much more now in his maimed estate, having never recovered that first crack

crack he got in his understanding by the fall of *Adam*. And as man hath lost, so Satan hath gained more and more experience; he lost his wisdom indeed as soon as he became a devil, but ever since he hath increast his craft, though he hath not wisdom enough to do himselfe good, yet subtilty enough to do others hurt. God shewes us where his strength lies, when he promieth he will *bruise the head of the Serpent*; his head crush't and he dies presently. Now in handling this Point of Saints subtilty, we shall consider him in his two main designs, and therein shew you his wiles and policies. His first main design is to draw into sin. The second is to accuse, vex and trouble the Saint for sinne. First, let us consider the devil as a tempter to sin, and there he shews his wily subtilty in three things.

First in choosing the most advantageous season for tempting.

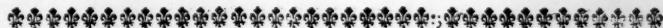
Secondly, in managing his temptations, laying them in such a method and forme, as shews his craft.

Thirdly, in pitching on fit instruments for his turne, to carry on his designe.

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CHAP. I.

Of Satans subtilty to choose the most advantageous seasons for tempting.

First, he shews his subtilty in choosing the most proper and advantageous seasons for tempting. To every thing there is a season, *Salomon* saith, *Ecc. 1. 3. 1.* that is, a nick of time, which taken gives facility and speedy dispatch to a business; And therefore the same Wise man gives this reason why man miscarries so frequently, and is disappointed in his enterprizes, *because he knows not his time*, *Ecc. 9. 11.* He comes when the bird is flown. A hundred souldiers at one time may turn a battel,

save an army, when thousand's will not do at another: Satan knows when to make his approaches, when (if at any time) he is most likely to be entertained. *As Christ hath the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season* of counsel and comfort, to a doubting dropping soule, so Satan shewes his black Art, and hellish skill, in speaking words of seduction and temptation in season, and a word in season is *a word on its wheeles*, I shall give you a view of his subtilty in special seasons, which he chooeth to tempt in.

The first season he takes to tempt in is, when newly converted. No sooner is this child of grace, the new creature borne, but this Dragon poures a flood of temptations after it. He haunt the *Egyptians* but some of his own craft, when he taught them that bloody and cruell baptisme, which they exercised upon the *Israelitish* babes, in throwing them into the river as soon as they were borne. The first cry of the new creature, gives all the legions of hell an alarm; They are as much troubled at it, as *Herod* and *Jerusalem* were, when Christ was borne; and now they sit in council to take away the life of this new born King. The Apostles met with more opposition and persecution in their latter dayes, when endued with larger portions of the Spirit, but with temptations from Satans in their former when young Converts; as you may observe in the several passages recorded of them. Satan knew grace within was but weak and their supplies promised at the Spirits coming, not landed; and when is an enemy more like to carry thee town then in such a low condition? and therefore he tries them all. Indeed the advantages are so many, that we may wonder how the young Convert escapes with his life; knowledge weak, and so soon let into an error, especially in divided times, when many wayes are held forth, one saying, Here is Christ; another, There is Christ, and the Christian ready to think every one means honestly, that comes with good words, as a little childe who hath lost his way to his fathers house, is prone to follow any that offer him their conduct. Experience of what he knows little; and if *Adam* whose knowledge so perfect, yet was soon cheate'd, (being assaulted before he was well warme in his new possessions,) how much more advantage hath Satan of the new Convert? in whom he findes every grace in so great an indisposition to make resistance

ance, both from its own weaknesse, and the strength of the contrary corruption, (which commonly in such is much unmortified) which makes it act with more difficulty and mixture, as in a fire newly kindled where the smoke is more then the flame, or like beere newly tunnd which raves thick; so that though there appear more strength of affection in such, that it works over into a greater abundance of duty then in others, yet with more dregs of carnal passions, which Satan knows, and therefore chooseth to stir what he sees troubled already.

Secondly, when the Saint is beset with some great affliction, This is as some blinde lane or solitary place, fit for this thief to call for his purse in. An expert Captain first labours to make a breach in the wall, and then falls on in storming the City. Satan first got power from God to weaken *Job* in his estate, children, health and other comforts he had, and now tempts him to impatience, and what not? he lets Christ fast forty dayes before he comes, and then he falls to his work; as an army stayes till a Castle be pinch'd for provision within, and then sends a parley, never more likely to be embraced then in such a strait. A temptation comes strong when the way to relief seems to lie through the sin that Satan is wooing to, when one is poor and Satan comes, What wilt starve rather then step over the hedge and steal for thy supply? this is enough to put flesh and blood to the stand.

Thirdly, when the Christian is about some notable enterprize for Gods glory, then Satan will lie like a Serpent in the way, *an Adder in the path, that biteth his horse-heels, so that his Rider shall fall backward.* Thus he stood at *Joshua's* right hand to resist him. The right hand is the working hand, and his standing there implies his desire to hinder him in his enterprize. Indeed the devil was never friend to Temple-work, and therefore that work is so long a doing. What a handsom excuse doth he help the Jew, unto, *The time is not come*: Gods time was come, but not the devils, and therefore he helps them to this poor shift, perverting the sense of Providence as if it were not time, because they were so poor, whereas they thrive no better because they went no sooner about the work, as God tells them plainly. *Paul & Barnabas* had a holy design in their thoughts, to go visite the brethren in every City, and strengthen their faith; the Devill knew

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knew what a blow this might give to his Kingdome, their visiting might hinder him in his Circuit, and he stirs up an unhappy difference between these two holy men, who grow so hot that they part in this storme, *Acts* 15. 30. There were two remarkable periods of Christs life, his *Intrat* and *Exit*, his entrance into his publick Ministry at his Baptisme, and his finishing it at his passion, and at both we have the devil fiercely encountering him. The more publick thy place, Christian, and the more eminent thy service for God, the more thou must look that the devil will have some more dangerous designe or other against thee, and therefore if every private souldier needs armour against Satans bullets of temptation, then the Commanders and Officers, who stand in the front of the battel, much more.

4. Fourthly, when he hath the presence of some object to enforce his temptation. Thus he takes Eve when she is near the tree, and had it in her ey while he should make the motion, that assaulting two ports at once, it might be the harder for her to hinder the landing of his temptation; and if Eves eye did so soon affect her heart with an inordinate desire, then much more now is it easie for him by the presence of the object, to excite and actuate that lust which lies dormant in the heart. As Naomi sent her daughter to lie at Boaz his feet, knowing well, if he endured her there, there were hope he might take her into his bed at last; If the Christian can let the object come so near, Satan will promise himselfe his suit may in time be granted. Therefore it should be our care if we would not yield to the sin, not to walk by, or sit at the door of the occasion? Look not on that beauty with a wandering eye, by which thou wouldest not be taken Prisoner; parley not with that in thy thoughts, which thou meanest not to let into thy heart; conversation begets affection: some by this have been brought to marry those, whom at first they thought they could not have liked.

5. Fifthly, after great manifestations of Gods love, then the Tempter comes. Such is the weak constitution of grace, that it can neither well bear smiles or frowns from God without a snare; As one said of our *English Nation*, *Totam nec pati potest libertatem nec servitutem*; It cannot well bear liberty nor bondage in the height: so neither can the soule, If God smile and opens him-

himself a little familiar to us, then we are prone to grow high and wanton, if he frown, then we sink as much in our faith; thus the one like fair weather and warme gleams, bring up the weeds of corruption; and the other, like sharp frosts, nip and even kill the flowers of grace; the Christian is in danger on both hands, therefore Satan takes this advantage, when the Christian is flush of comfort even as a cheater, who strikes in with some young heire, when he hath newly received his rents, and never leaves till he hath eased him of his money: Thus Satan lies upon the catch, then to inveigle a Saint into one sin or other, which he knowes will soon leak out his joy. Had ever any a larger testimony from heaven than *Peter*? *Matth. 16. 17.* where Christ pronounceth him blessed, and puts a singular honour upon him, making him the representative of all his Saints. No doubt this favour to *Peter*, stirred up the envious spirit the sooner to fall upon him. If *Josephs* party-coloured coat made the Patriarchs to plot against him their brother, no wonder malice should prompt Satan to shew his spite, where Christ had set such a mark of love and honour; and therefore we finde him soon at *Peters* elbow, making him his instrument to tempt his Master, who soon espied his cloven foot, and rebukes *Peter* with a *Get thee behinde me Satan*. He that seem'd a Rock even now, through Satan's policy, is laid as a stone of offence for Christ to stumble at. So *David*, when he had received such wonderfull mercies, settled in his throne with the ruine of his enemies, yea, pardoned for his bloody sin, now ready to lay down his head with peace in the dust: Satan chops in to cloud his clear evening and tempts him to number the people; so ambitious is Satan, then chiefly to throw the Saint into the mire of sin, when his coat is cleaneest.

Sixthly, at the houre of death, when the Saint is down and prostrate in his bodily strength, now this coward falls upon him: 'Tis the last indeed he hath for the game, now or never, overcome him now and ever; as they say of the naturall serpent, *Nonquam nisi moriens. producit in longum*: he never is seen at his length till dying: So this mistical serpent never strains his wit and wiles more, than when his time is thus short. The Saint is even stepping into eternity, and now he treads upon his heele, which if he cannot trip up so as to hinder his arrival in

heaven, yet at least to bruise it, that he may go with more pain thither.



CHAP. II.

Satans subtilty in managing his temptations, where several stratagems used by him to deceive the Christian, are laid down.

2. **T**He second way wherein Satan shewes his tempting subtilty, is in those stratagems he useth to deceive the Christian in the act of temptation.

First, he hangs out false colours, and comes up to the Christian in the disguise of a friend, so that the gates are opened to him, and his motions received with applause, before either be discovered; therefore he is said to *transform himself into an Angel of light*, 2 Cor. 11. 14. Of all plots 'tis most dangerous when he appears in *Samuel's* mantle, and silvers his foul tongue with faire language. Thus in point of error, he corrupts some in their judgements, by commending his notions for precious Gospel-truths, and like a cunning Chapman puts off his old ware, (errors I mean that have layen long upon his hand) only turkening them a little after the mode of the times, and they go for new light, under the skirt of Christian liberty; he conveyes in Libertinisme, by crying up the Spirit; he decries and vilifies the Scripture by magnifying faith: he labours to undermine repentance, and blow up good works; by bewailing the corruption of the Church in its administrations, he drawes unfitable soules from it, and amuseth them, till at last they fall into a *vertigo*, and can see no Church at all in being. And he prevails no lesse on the hearts and lives of men by this wile, then on their judgements. Under the notion of zeal, he kindles sometimes a dangerous flame of passion and wrath in the heart, which like a rash fire makes the Christians spirit boile over into unchristian desires of, and prayers,

ers for reveng where he should forgive; of which we have an instance in the disciples, *Luke 9. 55.* where two holy men are desiring that fire may come down from heaven. Little did they think from whence they had their coal, that did so heat them, till Christ told them, *Yee know not what Spirit you are of.* Sometimes he pretends pity and natural affection, which in some cases may be good counsel, and all the while he desires to promote cowardise and sinful self-love; whereby the Christian may be brought to fly from his colours, shrink from the truth, or decline some necessary duty of his calling; this his wile Christ soon spied, when he got Peter to be his spokesman, saying, *Master, pity thy self:* Who stopt his mouth with that sharpe rebuke, *Get thee bekinde me, Satan.* O what need have we to study the Scriptures, our hearts and Satans wiles, that we may not bid this enemy welcome, and all the while thinks it's Christ that is our guest!

A second policy he useth is to get intelligence of the Saints affairs. This is one great wheele in the Politicians clock, to have Spies in all places, by whom they are acquainted with the counsels and motions of their enemies, and this gives them advantage, as to disaappoint their designes, so more safely to compassse their own. 'Tis no hard matter for him to play his game wel, that sees his enemies hand. *David* knew how the squares went at Court, *Jonathans* arrowes carried him the news, and accordingly he ren overed his quarters, and was too hard for his great enemy *Saul.* Satan is the greatest Intelligencer in the world, he makes it his businesse to enquire into the inclinations, thoughts, affections, purposes of the creature, that finding which humours abounds, he may apply himself accordingly, which way the stream goes, that he may open the passage of temptation, and cut the channel to the fall of the creatures affections, and not force it against the torrent of nature. Now if we consider but the piercing apprehension of the Angelical nature how quick he is to take the scent which way the game goes by a world drop't, the cast of an eye or such a small matter (signal enough to give him the alarum) his experience in heart-anatomy, having inspected, and (as it were) dissected so many in his long practice, whereby his knowledge is much perfected, as also his great diligence to adde to both these, being as close a Student as ever,

considering the Saints, and studying how he may do them a mischief, as we see in *Jobs* case, whom he had so observed that he was able to give an answer *ex tempore* to God, what *Jobs* state and present posture was, and what might be the most probable means of obtaining his will of him: and besides all this, the correspondence that he hath with those in and about the Christian, from whom he learns much of his estate, as *David* by *Hushai* in *Absaloms* counsel; all these considered, 'tis almost impossible for the creature to stir out of the closet of his heart, but it will be known whether he inclines; some corrupt passion or other will bewray the soul to him, as they did *David* to *Saul*, who told him where he might finde him, in the wilderness of *Egedi*. Thus will the'e give intelligence to *Satan*, and say, if thou wouldst surprize such a one, he is gone that way, you shall have him in the wood of worldly employments, over head and eares in the desires and cares of this life, see where another sits under such a bower, delighting himself in this childe, or that gift, endowment of mind, or the like; lay but the lime-twigs there & you shall soon have him in it. Now *Satan* having this intelligence, lets him alone to act his part; he sure cannot be at a losse himself, when his scholars, (the *Jesuites* I mean) have such agility of mind, to wreath and cast themselves into any forme becoming the persons they would seduce. Is ambition the lust the heart favours? O the pleasing projects that he will put such upon! how easily having first blown them up with vain hopes, doth he draw them into horrid sins? Thus *Haman*, that he may have a monopoly of his Princes favour, is hurried into that bloody plot (fatal at last to himself) against the Jewes. Is uncleannesse the lust after which the creatures eye wanders? Now hee'll be the *Pandor*, to bring him and his Minion together. Thus he finding *Amnon* sick of this disease, sends *Jonadab* a deep-pated fellow, to put this fine device into head of feigning himself sick, whereby his Sister fell into his snare.

2 Sam. 24.1

2 Sam. 13.3

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3. In his gradual approaches to the soul. When he comes to tempt, he is modest & asks but a little, he knows he may get that at many times, which he should be denied if he askt all at once. A few are let into a city, when an army comming in a body, would be shut out, and therefore that he may beget no suspicion, he presents may be a few general propositions, which do not disco-

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ver the depth of this plot: these like Scouts goe before, while his whole bo'y lies hid as it were in some swamp at hand. Thus he wrigle into *Eve's* bosom, whom he doth not at first dath bid take & eat, no, he is more mannerly then so, this would have been so hideous, that as the fish with some sudden noise, by a stone cast into the river, is scared from the bait, so would she have been affrighted from holding parley with such a one: No, he propoun Is a question which shall make way for this, *Hayb God said?* Art not mist ken? Could this be his meaning, who'e Countie lets thee out of the rest, to deny thee the best of all? Thus he digs about and loosens the root of her faith, and then the tree falls the easier the next gust of temptation. This is a dangerous policy in deed. Many have yielded to goe a mile with Satan, that never intended to goe two; but when once on the way, have been allured further and further, till at last they know not how to leave his company. Thus Satan leads poor creatures down into the depths of sin by winding staires, that let thee not see the botom whether they are going: First he presents an object that occasions some thoughts, these set on fire the affections, and these fume up into the brain, and cloud the understanding, which being thus disarmed, now Satan dares a little more declare himself, and boldly sollicite the creature to that it would even now have defied. Many who at this day lie in open profaneness, never thought they should have rowled so far from their Profession, but Satan beuiled them, Poor souls, with the'r modest beginnings. O Christians, give not place to Satan, no not an inch in his first motions; he that is a beggar and a molester without doors, will command the house if let in; yiel sat first, and thou givest away thy strength to resist him in the rest; when the hen is worn, the whole garment will ravell out, if that be not mended by timely repentance.

The fourth way, wherein Satan shewes his subtilty in managing his temptations, is in his Reserves. A wise Captain hath ever some fresh Troops at hand to fall in at a pinch, when other are worsted. Satan is seldom at a losse in this respect, when one temptation is beat back, he soon hath another to fill up the gap, and make good the line. Thus he tempts Christ to diffidence and distrust, by bidding him turne stones into bread, as if it were time now to carve for himself, being so long neglected of his Father,

ther, as to fast fourty dayes, and no supplies heard of; No sooner had Christ quenched this dart with that, *It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*, but he hath another on the string which he let flie to him, tempting him to presumption, v 5. *Then the devil taketh and sets him on a pinnacle, and bids, Cast thy self down headlong, for it is written, He shall give his Angels charge over thee, &c.* As if he had said, If thou hast such confidence on God and his Word, as thou pretendest, shew it by casting thy self down, for thou hast a Word betwixt thee and the ground, if thou dar'st trust God; and truly, though Christ had his answer ready, and was prepared to receive his charge on the right hand and on the left, being so compleatly arm'd that no temptation could come amiss, yet note we, Satan temptations on Christ, were like the Serpents motion on a rock, (of which Solomon speaks) that makes no impression, no dint at all, but on us they are as a Serpent on sand or dust, that leaves a print, when not in the heart yet in the fancy, colours that which is next door to it, and so the object there is ready to slip in, if great care be not observ'd, especially when he doth thus change his hand, as when we have resisted one way, fall on a fresh another yea, plant his succeeding temptation upon our very resistance in the former. Now it requires some readinesse in our postures, and skill at all our weapons to make our defence, like a disputant, when he is put out of his road, & hath a new question started, or argument unusual brought, now he is tried to purpose. And truly this is Satans way when he tempts the Christian to neglect of duties of Gods worship (from his worldly occasions, the multitude of them or necessity of following them) and this takes not, then he is on the other side, and is drawing the Christian to the neglect of his worldly calling, out of a seeming zeal to promote his other in the worship of God. Or first, he comes and labours to dead the heart in duty, but the Christian too watchfull for him there, then he is puffing of him up with an opinion of his enlargement in it, and ever he keeps his fleest and most sublimated temptations for the last.

5th Fifthly, in his politick retreats you shall have an enemy flie as overcome, when it is on a designe of overcoming; this was Joshua's wife, by which he catch't the men of Ai in a trap, Josh. 3.8.
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We read not only of *Satans* being cast out, but of the *unclean spirit going out*, (voluntarily) yet with a purpose to come again, and bring worse company with him; *Matth.* 12. 43. Satan is not alwayes beat back by the dint and power of conquering grace, but sometimes he draws off, and raiseth his own siege, the more handsomely to get the Christian out of his fastnesses and trenches, that so he may snap him on the plaines, whom he cannot come at in his Works and Fortifications. Temptations send the Saint to His Castle, as the sight of the dog doth the coney to her Burrough; Now the soule walks the rounds, stands upon its guard, dares not neglect duty, because the enemy is under its very walls shutting in his temptations continually; but when Satan seemes to give the soule over, and the Christian finds he is not haunted with such motions as formerly, truly now he is prone to remit in his diligence, faile in his duty, and grow either infrequent or formal therein; As the *Romanes*, whose valour decayed for want of the *Carthaginian* troops to alarm them; let Satan tempt or not tempt, assault or retreat, keep thou in order, stand in a fighting posture, let his sight strengthen thy faith, but not weaken thy care. The *Parthians* do their enemies most hurt in their flight, shooting their darts as they run, and so may Satan do thee, if thy seeming victory makes thee secure.



CHAP. III.

Of Satans subtilty, in choosing instruments fit for his turne to carry on his tempting design.

THe third particular in which Satan shewes his subtilty, as a Tempter is in the choice of those instruments, whom he useth for the carrying on this his design, he as the Master-workman cuts out the temptation, and gives it the shape, but sometimes he hath his Journey men to make it up, he know his work may

may be carried on better by others, when he appears not above board himself. In hee there is not such a suitableness between the Angelicall nature & mans, as there is between one man & another; and therefore he cannot make his approaches so familiarly to us, as man can do to man; and here (as in other things) he is God's Ape: you know this very reason was given, why the *Isra'ites* desired God might not speak to them, but *Moses*, and God liked

Deut.

18. the motion; *They have well said*, saith God, *I will raise up a*
 17. *Prophet from the midst of them like unto thee.* Thus Satan, he useth the Ministry of men like our selves, by which as he becomes more familiar, so he is lesse suspected, while *Joab*-like, he gets another to do his errand. Now 'tis not any will serve his turne for this employment, he is very choice in his instruments he pitcheth on; 'tis not every souldier is fit for an Ambassage to treat with an enemy, to betray a town and the like. Satan considers who can do his work to his greatest advantage; and in this he is unlike God, who is not at all choice in his instruments, because he needs none, and is able to do as well with one as another; but Satans power being finite, he must patch up the defect of the Lions skin with the Foxes. Now the persons Satan aims at for his instruments are chiefly of foure sorts.

First, persons of place and power. Secondly, persons of parts and policie. Thirdly, persons of holinesse; or at least reputed so. Fourthly, persons of relation and interest.

1.

First, Satan makes choice of persons of place and power. These are either in the Common-wealth or Church, if he can he will secure the Throne and the Pulpit, as the two Forts that command the whole line. First, men of power in the Common-wealth, 'tis his old trick to be tampering with such. A Prince, a Ruler may stand for a thousand; therefore saith *Paul* to *Elymas*, when he would have turned the Deputy from the faith: *O full of all subtilty, thou child of the devill!* *Acts* 13. 8. As if he had said, you have learn't this of your father the devill, to haunt the Courts of Princes, winne into the favour of great ones. There is a double policy Satan hath, in gaining such to his side. First, none have such advantage to draw others to their way: corrupt the Captain, and 'tis hard if he bring not off his troop with him. When the Princes, men of renown in their tribes,

Num. 16

2, 19.

stood up with *Coral*, presently a multitude are drawn into the

Con-

conspiracy. Let *Jeroboam* set up idolatry, and *Israel* is soon in a snare; it's said the people willingly walked after his Commandment, *Hos. 5. 11.* Secondly, Should the sin stay at Court, and the infection go no further, yet the sin of such a one, (though a good man) may cost a whole Kingdome deare. *1 Chron. 21. 1.* Satan stood up against *Israel*, and provok'd *David* to number the people. He owed *Israel* a spite, and he payes them home in their Kings sin, which dropt in a fearfull plague upon their heads. Secondly, such as are in place and office in the Church. No such way to infect the whole town, as to poyson the Cistern at which they draw their water; who shall perswade *Abah* that he may go to *Ramoth-Gilead* and fall? Satan can tell, *I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of his Prophets, 2 Kings 22. 21.* How shall the profane be hardened in their sins? Let the Preacher sowe pillowes under their elbows, and cry peace, peace, and it's done. How may the worship of God come to be neglected? Let *Hophni* and *Phineas* be but scandalous in their lives, and many both good and bad will abhor the sacrifice of the Lord.

Secondly, he employeth persons of parts and policy, if any hath more pregnancy of wit, and depth of reason than other, he is the man Satan looks upon for his service: and so far he prevails that very few of this rank are found among Christs disciples, *Not many wise.* Indeed, God will not have his Kingdome, either in the heart or in the world, maintained by carnal policy, 'tis a Gospel-command that we walk in godly simplicitie, *sine plicis*; though the Serpent can shrink up into his folds, and appear what he is not, yet it doth not become the Saints to juggle or shuffle with God or men; and truly when any of them have made use of the Serpents subtilty, it hath not followed their hands; *Jacob* got the blessing by a wile, but he might have had it cheaper with plain dealing. *Abraham* and *Sarah* both dissimile to *Abimelech*, God discovers their sin, and reproves them for it by the mouth of an Heathen. *Asa* out of State-policy joyns league with *Syria*, yea, pawns the vessels of the Sanctuary, and all for help, and what comes of all this? *Herein thou hast done foolishly*, saith God, *From henceforth thou shalt have wars.* Sinful policy shall not long thrive in the Saints hands well, but Satan will not out of his way, he enquires for the subtillest-pated men, a *Balaam*, a *Hitophel*, *Haman*, *Sanballat*, men admired for their

counsel and deep plots, these are for his turne. A wicked cause needs a smooth Orator, bad ware a pleasing Chapman, as in particular, his instruments he useth to seduce and corrupt the mindes of men are commonly subtile pated men, such, *that if it were possible should deceive the very elect.* This made the Apostle so jealous of the *Corinthians*, whom he had espoused to Christ, lest as Eve by the *Serpent*, so their mindes should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. He must be a cunning devil indeed, that can draw off the Spouses love from her beloved, yet there is such a witchery in Satans instruments, that many have been brought to flye on the face of those truths and ordinances, yea, Christ himselfe to whom they have seemed espoused formerly. Now in three particulars this sort of Satans instruments shew their Masters subtilty.

1. First, in aspersing the good name of the sincere messengers of Christ. Satans old trick to raise his credit upon the ruined reputation of Christs faithful servants. Thus he taught *Corah, Dathan* and *Abiram*, to charge *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Yee take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation is holy*: they would make the people believe, that it was the pride of their heart, to claim a monopoly to themselves, as if none but *Aaron* and his fraternity were holy enough to offer incense, and by this subtile practice thy seduced (for a while) in a manner, the whole Congregation to their side. So the lying Prophets (that were Satans Knights of the post to *Abah*,) all foul on good *Micaiah*. Our Saviour himselfe was no better handled by the Pharisees and their Confederates, and *Paul* the chief of the Apostles, his Ministry undermined, and his reputation blasted by false teachers, as if he had been some weak sorry Preacher, *His bodily presence is weak, say they, and his speech contemptible*; and is this your admired man?
2. Secondly, in covering their impostures and errors with choice notions and excellent truths. *Arius* himselfe, and other dangerous instruments of Satan were too wise to stuffe their discourses with nothing but heterodoxe matter, precious truths dropt from them with which they sprinkled their corrupt principles, yet with such art as should not easily be discerned. This (as one observes) our Savior warns his disciples of, when he bids them *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*, (that is, of their errors.) But why leaven? For the secret mixture of it with the whole bread;

bread, you do not make your bread all of leaven, none would then eat it, but crumble a little into a whole batch, which sowers all: thus Christ doth tell the disciples, that the Pharisees among many truths mixt their errors, and therefore it behoves them to beware, lest with the truth the error goes down also, Again, leaven is very like the dough, of the same grane with it, only differs in age and sowerneſſe: thus Christ intimates the resemblance of their errors to the truth, scraped, as it were, out of the Scriptures, but sowered with their own false glosses. This indeed makes it easie for Christs sheepe to be infected with the scab of error, because that weed which breeds the rot is so like the grasse that nourisheth them.

Thirdly, their subtilty appears in holding forth such principles as are indulgent to the flesh. This brings in whole shoals of silly soules into their net, the heart of man loves of life to shape a Religion according to its own humour, and is easie to believe that to be a truth, which favours its own inclination. Now there are three lusts that Satans instruments labour to gratifie in their doctrine, Carnal Reason, Pride, & fleshly Liberty.

First, Carnal reason, this is the great idol which the more intelligent part of the world worship, making it the very standard of their faith, and from this bitter root have sprong those Arrian and Socinian heresies. And truly he that will go no further then reason will carry him, may hold out in the plain way of the Moral Law, but when he comes to the depths of the Gospel, must either go back, or be content that faith should help reason over.

Secondly, another lust that Satan cockers, is pride. Man naturally would be a god to himself, [though for clambering so high he got his fall] and what ever doctrine nourisheth a good opinion of man in his own eye, this is acceptable to him, and this hath spawned another fry of dangerous errors. The Pelagian and semi Pelagian, which set nature upon its legs, and perswade man he can go alone to Christ, or at least with a litle external help, of an hand to lead, or argument to excite, without any creating work in the soule. O, we cannot conceive how glib such stuffe goes down. If one Workman should tell you that your house is rotten, and must be pul'd down, and all new materials prepared; and another should say no such matter,

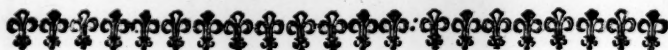
such a beam is good, and such a spare may stand; a little cost will serve the turn; it were no wonder that you should listen to him that would put you to least cost and trouble: The faithful servants of Christ tell sinners from the word, that man in his natural state is corrupt and rotten, that nothing of the old frame will serve, and there must needs be all new; but in comes an Arminian, and blows up the sinners pride, and tells him he is not so weak or wicked as the other represents him, if thou wilt thou mayest repent and believe, or at least by exerting thy natural abilities, oblige God to superadde what thou hast not. This is the Workman that will please proud man best.

3. Thirdly, Satan by his instruments nourisheth that desire of fleshly liberty, which is in man by nature, who is a son of *Belial*, without yoke; and if he must wear any, that will please best, which hath the softest lining, and pincheth the flesh least, and therefore when the sincere teachers of the Word will not abate of the strictnesse of the command, but presse sincere obedience to it, then comes Satans instruments and say, these are hard task-masters, who will not allow one play-day in a year to the Christian, but tye him to continual duty, wee'l shew you an easier way to heaven: Come, saith the Papist, confesse but once a year to the Priest, (pay him well for his pains) and be an obedient son of the Church, and wee'le dispence with all the rest. Come, saith the Familist, the Gospel Charter allows more liberty than these legal Preachers tell you of; they bid you repent and believe, when Christ hath done all these to your hand. What have you left to do but to nourish the flesh? Something sure is in it, that Impostures finde such quick return for their ware, while Truth hangs upon the log; and is it not this? that they are content to afford heaven cheaper to their disciples, than Christ will to his. He that sels cheapest shall have most customers, though at last best will be best cheap; Truth with self-denial, a better penny-worth, than error with all its flesh-pleasing.

3. Thirdly, Satan makes choice of such as have a great name for holiness, none to a *live bird* to draw other birds into the net. But is it possible that such should do this work for the devil? yes, such is the policy of Satan, & the frailty of the beast, that the most holy men have bin his instruments to seduce others. *Abraham* he tempts his wife to ly, *Say thou art my Sister*. The old Prophet

phet leads the man of God out of his way, 1 Kings 13. the holiness of the man and the reverence of his age, 'tis like, gave authority to his counsel. O how should this make you watchful, whose long travel and great progresse in the wayes of God have gained you a name of eminency in the Church, what you say, do; or hold, because you are file-leading men, and others look more on you: then their way.

Fourthly, Satan chooseth such, as by relation or affection have deep interest in the persons he would gain. Some will kisse the childe for the Nurses sake, and like the Present for the hand that brings it. 'Tis like *David* would not have received that from *Nabal*, which he took from *Abigail*, and thanks her. Satan sent the apple by *Eves* hand to *Adam*. *Delilah* doth more with *Samson*, then all the *Philistines* bands. *Jobs* wife brings him the poison, *Curse God and die*. Some think Satan spared her life, when he slew his children and servants, (though she was also within his Commission) as the most likely instrument, by reason of her relation, and his affection, to lead him into temptation. Satan employes *Peter* a disciple to tempt *Christ*, at another time his friends and kindsfolk. Some Martyrs have confessed, the hardest work they met withal, was to overcome the prayers and tears of their friends and relations. *Paul* himself could not get off this snare without heart-breaking. *What mean ye to weep, and to break my heart?* Acts 21. 13.



CHAP. IV.

*Wherein this Point of Satans subtilty,
as a Tempter to sin, is briefly applied.*

Use I.

First, affect not sinful policy, and subtilty, it makes you but like the devil. There is the wisdom of the Serpent, which is commended, and that is his perfection as a creature, in which both the literal and the mystical excel, the one in an ingenious observing nature above the beast of the field, and the other in knowledge as an Angel above men; but as the subtilty of the one, and knowledge of the other is degenerate, and makes them more able to do mischief, the one to the bodies, the others to the soules of men, this kinde of wisdom and subtilty is to be abhorred by us: *The Serpents eye (as one saith) does well only in the Doves head.*

I.

First, affect not subtilty in contriving any sin. Some are *wise to do evil*, Jer. 4. 22. Masters of this craft, who can as they lie on their beds, cast their wicked designes into an artificial method, shewing a kind of devilish wit therein, as the *Egyptians* who dealt wisely (as they thought) with the *Israelites* and *Jezabel*, who had printed her bloody design in so faire a letter, that some might read her Saint while she was playing the devil. This is the black art indeed, and will make the soul black as hell that practiseth it. It is not hard for any (though a fool) to learn. Be but wicked, and the devil will help thee to be witty; Come but a while to his school, and thou mayest soon be a *cunning man*. No sins speak a higher attainment in wickedness, then those which are the result of deliberate counsel and deep plottings. Creatures, as they go longer with their young, so their birth is more strong & perfect, as the *Elephant* above all others. The longer a sin is a forming and forging within, and the oftner the

the head an heart meet about it, the compleater the sinne. Here are many litters of unform'd sins in one, such I mean, that are conceived and cast forth in the hurry of an extemporary passion, such suddain acts shew weaknesse, these other deep wickednesse.

Secondly, take heed of hidling sin when thou hast committed it. This is one of the devices that are in mans heart, and as much art and cunning is shewn in this, as in any one sort of the sinners trade. What a trick had the Patriarchs to blinde their fthers eye with a *bloudy coat*? *Josephs* Mistressse to prevent a charge from *Joseph*, accuseth him for what she is guilty, like the Robber who scap'd by crying *Stop the Thief*. God taught man to make coats to cover his naked body, but the devil learnt him to weave these coverings to hide the nakednesse of his soule; the more subtil thou seemest in concealing thy sin, the more egregiously thou playest the fool. None so sham'd as the lyar when found out, and that thou art sure to be. Thy covering is too thort to hide thee from Godseye, and what God sees, (if thou dost not put thy self to shame) he will tell all the world of hereafter) however thou escapest in this life.

Thirdly, take heed of subtilty and sinful policy, in compassing that which is lawfull in it self, 'tis lawfull to improve thy estate and husband it well for thy posterity, but take not the devils counsell, who will be putting thee upon some tricks in thy trade and slights in thy dealing; such may goe for wise men a while, but the Prophet reads their destiny, *Jer. 17. 11. At his end he shall be a fool.* 'Tis lawfull to love our estate, life, liberty, but beware of sinful policy to save them. 'Tis no wisdom to shuffle with God, by denying his truth, or shifting off our duty to keep correspondence with men; he is a weak fencer that layes his soul at open guard to be stabbed and wounded with guilt, while he is lifting up his hands to give a broken head. Our fear commonly meets us at that doorway which we think to run from it. *He that will save his life shall lose it.* As you love your peace. Christians be plain-hearted with God and man, and keep the Kingshigh way; goe the plain way of command to obtaine thy desire, and not leap over hedge and ditch to come a little sooner to the journeyes end; such commonly either meet with some stop that makes them come back with shame, or else put to venture

venture their necks in some desperate leap. He is sure to come faster (if not sooner) home, that is willing to goe a little about to keep God company. The Historians observation is worth the Christians remembrance: *Consilia callida prima species leta, tractatu dura, eventu tristia*, Livius. Craty counsels promise faire at first, but prove more difficult in the manging, and in the end doe pay the undertaker home with desperate sorrow.

Use 2. Is Satan so subtil? O then think not to be too cunning for the devil hee'll be too hard for thee at last, sin not with thoughts of an after-repentance; it is possible thou meanest this at present: but dost thou think who sits down to play with this cheater, to draw out thy stock when thou pleasest? alas, poor wretch, he has a thousand devices to carry thee on, and engage thee deeper, till he hath not left thee any tenderneffe in thy conscience. As some have been served at play, intending only to venture a shilling or two, yet have by the secret witchery in gaming, played the very cloathes off their back before they had done; O how many have thus sinned away all their principles, yea, Profession it self, that they have not so much as this cloak left, but walk naked to their shame? Like children, who got into a boat, think to play near the shore, but are unawares by a violent gust carried down to the wide sea. O how know you that dally with Satan, but that at last you may (who begin modestly) be carried down to the broad sea of prophane's? Some men are so subtil to over-reach, and so cruel when they get men into their hands, that a man had better beg his bread than borrow of them. Such a Merchant is Satan cunning to insinuate, and get the creature into his books, and when he hath him on the hip, no more mercy to be had at his hand, than the lambe may expect from the ravenous wolfe.

Use 3. Study the wiles, and acquaint thy self with Satans policy. Paul takes it for granted, that every Saint doth in some measure understand them; *We are not ignorant of his devices*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. He is but an ill fencer that knows and observes nothing of his enemies play; many particular stratagems I have laid down already which may help a little, and for thy direction in this study of, and enquirie into Satans wiles, take this three-fold counsel.

1. First, take God into thy counsel. Heaven over-looks Hell.
God

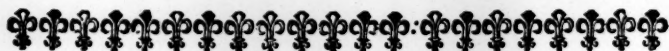
God at any time can tell thee, what plots are hatching there against thee. Consider Satan as he is Gods creature, so God cannot but know him. He that makes the Watch, knowes every pin in it. He formed this crooked Serpent, though not the crookednesse of this Serpent, and though Satans way in tempting is as wonderful as the way of a Serpent on a rock, yet God traceth him; yea, knows all his thoughts together. *Hell it self is naked before him*, and this destroyer hath no covering. Again, consider him as Gods prisoner, who hath him fast in chaines, and so the Lord, who is his keeper, must needs know whether his prisoner goes, who cannot stie without his leave. Lastly, consider him as his messenger, for so he is. *An evil spirit from the Lord vexed Saul*, and he that gives him his errand, is able to tell thee what it is. Go then and plough with Gods heifer, improve thy interest in Christ, who knows what his Father knows, and is ready to reveal all that concerns thee to thee, *Job. 15. 15.* It was hee who defcried the devil comming against Peter and the rest of the Apostles, and faithfully revealed it to them, *Luke 22.* before they thought of any such matter. Through Christs hands passe all that is transacted in heaven and hell. Wee live in dayes of great actions, deep counsels, and plots on all sides, and only a few that stand on the upper end of the world know these mysteries of State, all the rest know little more than Pamphlet-intelligence: Thus it is in regard of those plots which Satan in his infernal Conclave is laying against the soules of men. they are but a few that know any thing to purpose of Satans designs against them; and those are the Saints from whom God cannot hide his own counsels of love, but sends his Spirit to reveal unto them here, what he hath prepared for them in heaven, *1 Cor. 2. 10.* and therefore much lesse will he conceal any destructive plot of Satan from them.

Be intimately acquainted with thy own heart, and thou wilt the better know his designe against thee, who takes his method of tempting, from the inclination and posture of thy heart. As a General walks about the City, and views it well, and then raiseth his Batteries, where he hath the greatest advantage: So doth Satan compass, and consider the Christian in every part before he tempts.

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Lastly

Lastly, be careful to read the Word of God with observation. In it thou hast the History of the most remarkable battels that have been fought by the most eminent Worthies in Christs Army of Saints, with this great Warriour Satan; Here thou mayest see how Satan hath foiled them, and how they have recovered their lost ground. Here you have his Cabinet-counsels opened, there is not a lust which you are in danger of, but you have it described, not a temptation which the Word doth not arme you against. It is reported that a certain Jew should have poisoned Luther, but was happily prevented by his picture which was sent to Luther, with a warning from a faithfull friend, that he should take heed of such a man when he saw him, by which he knew the Murderer, and escaped his hands. The word shews thee, O Christian, the face of those lusts, which Satan employes to butcher thy precious soule; *By them is thy servant warned,* saith David, *Psal. 19. 11.*



CHAP. V.

Wherein is shewed the subtilty of

Satan, as a Troubler and an Accuser for sin, where many of his wiles and policies to disquiet the Saints spirits are discovered.

THe second General in which Satan appears such a subtile enemy; is in molesting the Saints peace, and disquieting the Saints spirit. As this holy Spirits work is not only to be a Sanctifier, but also a Comforter, whose fruits are *righteousnesse and peace*, so the evil spirit Satan is both a seducer unto sin, and an accuser for sin, a Tempter and a Troubler, and indeed in the same order. As the Holy Ghost is first a Sanctifier, and then a Comforter; so atan first a Tempter, then a Troubler. *Josephs* Mistress first tries to draw him to gratifie her lust, that string breaking she hath another to strounce him and charge him, and
for

for a plea she hath his coat to cover her malice, nor is it hard for Satan to pick some hole in the Saints coat, when he walks most circumspectly. The proper seat of sin is the Will, of comfort, the Conscience; Satan hath not absolute knowledge of, or power over these, (being lock't up from any other but God) and therefore what he doth, either in defiling temptations, or disquieting, is by wiles more then by open force, and he is not inferior in troubling, to himself in tempting. Satan hath as the Serpent, away by himself; other beasts, their motion is direct, right on, but the Serpent goes a skue (as we say) winding and wreathing its body, that when you see a serpent creeping along, you can hardly discern which way it tends; thus Satan in his vexing temptations hath many intricate policies, turning this way and that way, the better to conceal his designe from the Saint, which will appear in these following methods.

SECT. I.

First, he vexeth the Christian by laying his brats at the Saints door, and charging him with that which is his own creature, and here he hath such a notable Art, that many dear Saints of God are woefully hampered and dejected, as if they were the vilest blasphemers, and veriest Atheists in the world; whereas indeed the cup is of his own putting into the sack, but so slyly conveyed into the Saints bosome, that the Christian, though amazed and frighted at the sight of them, yet being jealous of his own heart, and unacquainted with Satans tricks of this kind, cannot conceive how such motions should come there, (if not bred in, and vomited out by his own naughty heart) and so bears the blame of the sin himself, because he cannot finde the right father, mourning as one that is forlorn and cast off by God, or else (saith he) I should never have such vermin of hell creeping in my bosome, and here Satan hath his end he proposeth; for he is not so silly as to hope he should have welcome with such a horrid crue of blasphemous and atheistical thoughts in that soul, where he hath been denied when he came in an enticing way; no, but his designe is by way of revenge, because the soul will

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not prostitute it self to his lust otherwayes, therefore to haunt it and scare it with those imps of blasphemy; As he served *Luther* to whom he appeared, and when repulsed by him, went away and left a noisome stinch behinde him in the room. Thus when the Christian hath worsted Satan in his more pleasing temptations, being madded, he belcheth forth this stinch of blasphemous motions to annoy and affright him, that from them the Christian may draw some sad conclusion or other; and indeed the Christians sin lies commonly more in the conclusion, which he draws from them (as that he is not a child of God) then in the motions themselves. All the counsel therefore I shall give thee in this case, is to do with these motions, as you doe to serve those vagrants and rogues that come about the country, whom, though you cannot keep from passing through your town, yet you look they settle not there, but whip them and send them to their own home: Thus give these motions, the Law, in mourning for them, resisting of them, and they shall not be your charge (yea 'tis like you shall seldomer be troubled with such guests,) but if once you come to entertain them, and be Satans nurse to them, then the Law of God will cast them upon you.

SECT. II.

2. Secondly, another while of Satan as a troubler, is in aggravating the Saints sins, (against which he hath a notable declamatory faculty) not that he hates the sin, but the Saint; now in this his chief subtilty is so to lay his charge, that it may seem to be the act of the holy Spirit; he knowes an arrow out of Gods quiver wounds deep; and therefore when he accuseth he comes in Gods Name: as suppose a child were conscious to himselfe of displeasing his father, and one that owes him a spite (to trouble him should counterfeite a letter from his father, and cunningly conveys it into the sons hand, who receives it as from his father, wherein he chargeth him with many heavy crimes, disownes him, and threatens he shall never come in his sight, or have penny portion from him, the poor son (conscious to himselfe of many unprofitful carriages, and not knowing the plot) takes
on

on heavily, and can neither eat nor sleep for grief, here is a real trouble begot from a false and imaginary ground. Thus Satan observes how the squares goe between God and his children, such a Saint he sees tardy in this duty, faulty in that service, and he knows the Christian is conscious of this, and that the spirit of God will also shew his distaste for these, both which prompts Satan to draw a charge at length, raking up all the bloody aggravations he can think of, and give it into the Saint as sent from God. Thus he taught *Jobs* friends to pick up those infirmities, which drop't from him in his distresse, and shoot them back in his face, as if indeed they had been sent from God to declare him an hypocrite, and denounce his wrath for the same.

But how shall we know the false accusation of Satan from the rebukes of God and his Spirit? Quest.

First, if they crosse any former act or work of the Spirit in thy soul, they are Satans, not the Holy Spirits. Now you shall observe, Satans scope in accusing the Christian, and aggravating his sin, is to unfaint him, and perswade him he is but an hypocrite. O, saith Satan, now thou hast shewen what thou art, see what a foul spot is on thy coat, this is not the spot of a childe; whoever that was a Saint committed such a sin after such a sort? All thy comforts & confidence which thou hast bragg'd of, were false, I warrant you: thus you see Satan at one blow dasheth all in pieces. The whole fabrick of grace which God hath been rearing up many years in the soule, must now at one puff of his malicious mouth be blown down, and all the sweet comforts with which the Holy Spirit hath seal'd up Gods love, must be defaced with this one blot, which Satan drawes over the faire copy of the Saints evidence. Well, soul, for thy comfort know, if ever the Spirit of God hath begun a sanctifying or comforting work, causing thee to hope in his mercy, he never is, will, or can be the messenger to bring contrary news to thy soul, his language is not yea and nay, but *Yea* and *Amen* for ever. Indeed when the Saint playes the wanton, he can chide, yea, will frown and tell the soul roundly of its sin, as he did *David* by *Nathan*, *Thou art the man*, this thou hast done, and paints out his sin with such bloody colours, as made *Dauids* heart melt, as it were, into so many drops of water: But that shall not serve his turn, he tels

him what a rod is sleeping for him (that shall smart to purpose,) one of his own house; no other then his darling son shall rise up against him, that he may the more fully conceive how ill God took the sin of him, a child, a Saint, when he shall know what it is to have his beloved child traiterously invade his Crown, and unnaturally hunt for his precious life; yet not a word all this while is heard from *Nathan* teaching *David* to un'aint himself, and call in question the worke of God in his soule. No, he had no such commission from God, he was sent to make him mourn for his sin, not from his sin to question his state which God had so oft put out of doubt.

22. Secondly, when they asperse the riches of Gods grace, and so charge the Christian, that withall they reflect upon the good Name of God, then they are not of the Holy Spirit, but from Satan. When you finde your sins so represented and aggravated to you, as exceeding either the mercy of Gods nature, or the grace of his Covenant, *Hic se aperit diabolus*: this comes from that soule liar. The Holy Spirit is Christs spokesman to commend him to soules, and to woe sinners to embrace the grace of the Gospel, and can such words drop from his sacred lips, as should break the match, and sink Christs esteem in the thoughts of the creature? you may know where this was minded. When you hear one commend another for a wife or good man, and at last come in with a but that dasheth all, you will easily think he is no friend to the man, but some sly enemy that by seeming to commend, desires to disgrace the more: Thus when you finde God represented to you as merciful and gracious, but not to such a great sinner as you, to have power and strength, but not able to save thee, you may say, Avant Satan, thy speech bewrayeth thee.

SECT. III.

3. Thirdly, another wile of Satan lies in cavilling at the Christians duties and performances, by which he puts him to much toil and trouble. He is at Church as soon as thou canst be, Christian, for thy heart, yea, he stands under thy closet-window, and heares what thou sayest to God in secret, all the while studying how

how he may commence a suit against thee from thy duty; like those that come to Sermons to carp and catch at what the Preacher saith, that they may make him an offender for some word or other mis-placed; or like a cunning Opponent in the Schooles, while his adversary is busie in reading his position, he is studying to confute it; and truly Satan hath such an Art at this, that he is able to take our duties in pieces, and so disfigure them that they shall appear formal, though never so zealous, hypocritical, though enricht with much sincerity. When thou hast done thy duty, Christian; then stands up this Sophister to ravel out thy work, there (will he say) thou playedst the hypocrite, zealous, but serving thy self, here wandering, there nodding; a little further puffed up with pride, and what wages canst thou hope for at Gods hands, now thou hast spoiled his work, and cut it all out into chips? Thus he makes many poor soules lead a weary life, nothing they do but he hath a sling at, that they know not whether best pray or not, here or not; and when they have prayed and heard, whether it be to any purpose or not: Thus their soules hang in doubt, and their dayes passe in sorrow: while their enemy stands in a corner, and laughs at the cheat he hath put upon them; as one, who by putting a counterfeit spider into the dish, makes those that sit at table either out of conceit with the meat, that they dare not eat, or afraid of themselves if they have eaten, lest they should be poisoned with their meat.

But you will say, *What will you have us do in this case to withstand the cavils of Satan, in reference to our duties?*

Quest.

First, let this make thee more accurate in all thou doest: 'tis the very end God aims at in suffering Satan thus to watch you, that you his children might be the more circumspect, because you have one over-looks you, that will be sure to tel tales of you to God, and accuse thee to thy own self. Doth it not behove thee to write thy Copy faire, when such a Critick reads and scans it over? Doth it not concern thee to know thy heart weell, to turn over the Scriptures diligently, that thou mayest know the state of thy soule-controversie in all the cases of conscience thereof, when thou hast such a subtille Opponent to reply upon thee;

Answer.

Secondly, let it make thee more humble. If Satan can charge thee with so much in thy best duties, O what then can thy God do?

do! God suffers sometimes the infirmities of his people to be known by the wicked, (who are ready to check and frump them for them) for this end, to humble his people, how much more low should these accusations of Satan, which are in a great part too true, lay us before God?

3. Thirdly, observe the fallacy of Satans argument, which discovered, will help thee to answer his cavill: The fallacy is double.

1. First, he will perswade thee that thy duty and thy selfe are hypocritical, proud, formal, &c. Because something of these sins are to be found in thy duty: Now, Christian, learn to distinguish between pride in a duty, and a proud duty, hypocrisie in a person and an hypocrite, wine in a man and a man in wine. The best of Saints have the stirrings of such corruptions in them and in their services; these birds will light on an *Abrahams* sacrifice, but comfort thy self with this, that if thou findest a party within thy bosome pleading for God, and entering its protest against these, thou and thy services are Evangelically perfect. God beholds these as the weaknesses of thy sickly state here below, and pitties thee, as thou wouldst doe thy lame childe; how odious is he to us that mocks one for natural defects, a blear eye, or a stammering tongue? Such are these in thy new nature. Observable is that in Christs prayer against Satan, *Zech. 3. 3. The Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, is not this a brand pluck't out of the fire?* As if Christ had said, Lord, wilt thou suffer this envious spirit to twit thy poor childe with, and charge him for those infirmities that cleave to his perfect state? He is but new pluck't out of the fire. No wonder there are some sparks unquencht, some corruptions unmortified, some disorders unreformed in his place and calling, and what Christ did for *Jeshuah*, he doth uncessantly for all his Saints, for apologizing for their infirmities with his Father.

2. Secondly, his other fallacy is in arguing from the sin that is in our duty, to the non-acceptance of them. Will God, saith he, think'st thou, take such broken groats at thy hand? Is he not a holy God? Now here, (Christian) learn to distinguish and answer Satan. There is a double acceptance. There is an acceptance of a thing by way of payment of a debt, and there is an acceptance of a thing offered as a token of love, and testimony of

of gratitude. He that will not accept of broken money, or half the summe for payment of a debt: the same man, if his friend sends him, though but a bent sixpence, in token of his love, will take it kindly. 'Tis true (Christian) the debt thou owest to God must be paid in good and lawful money, but (for thy comfort) here Christ is thy pay-master; send Satan to him, bid him bring his charge against Christ, who is ready at Gods right hand to clear his accounts, and shew his discharge for the whole debt; but now thy performances and obedience come under another notion, (as tokens of thy love and thankfulness to God,) and such is the gracious disposition of thy heavenly father, that he accepts thy mite: Love refuseth nothing that love sends. 'Tis not the weight or worth of the gift, but the desire of a man is his kinnesse. Pro. 19. 22.

SECT. IV.

A fourth wile of Satan as a troubler, is to draw the Saint into the depths of despair, under a specious pretence of not being humbled enough for sin. This we finde singled out by the Apostle for one of the devils fetches. *We are not ignorant* (saith he) *of his devices.* 2 Cor. 2. 11 *πονηματα*, his Sophistical reasonings. Satan sets much by his slight; no weapon oftener in his hand: where is the Christian that hath not met him at this door? here Satan findes the Christian easie to be wrought on, the humours being stirr'd to his hand, while the Christian of his own accord complains of the hardnesse of his heart, and is very prone to believe any who comply with his musing thoughts; yea, thinks every one flatters him, that would perswade him otherwise. 'Tis easier to die that soul into black, which is of a sad colour already, then to make such a one take the lightsome tincture of joy and comfort.

But how shall I answer this subtile enemy, when he thus perplexeth my spirit, with not being humbled enough for sin, &c? Quest.

I answer as to the former, labour to spie the fallacy of his argument and his mouth is soon stop't. Ans.

First, Satan argues thus: There ought to be a proportion between sin and sorrow: But there is no proportion between thy sins

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and thy sorrow: Therefore thou art not humbled enough. What a plausible argument is here at first blush? For the major, that there ought to be a proportion between sin and sorrow, this Satan will shew you Scripture for. *Manasseh* was a great sinner and an ordinary sorrow will not serve his turn; *He humbled himself greatly before the Lord*. Now (saith Satan) weigh thy sin in the ballance with thy sorrow; art thou as great a Mourner as thou hast been a sinner? So many yeares thou hast waged war against the Almighty, making havock of his lawes, loading his patience till it groaned again, raking in the sides of Christ with thy bloody dagger (while thou didst grieve his Spirit, and eject his grace,) and dost think a little remorse (like a rolling cloud letting fall a few drops of sorrow) will now be accepted? no, thou must steep in sorrow as thou hast soakt in sin. Now to shew you the fallacy, we must distinguish of a twofold proportion of sorrow.

First, an exact proportion of sorrow to the inherent nature and demerit of sin.

Secondly, there is a proportion to the Law and Rule of the Gospel. Now the first is not thing feasible, because the injury done in the least sin is infinite, he aulse done to an infinite God; and if it could be feasible, yet according to the tenour of the first Covenant it would not be acceptable; because it had no clause to give any hope for an after game by repentance; but the other which is a Gospel-sorrow, this is indeed *repentance unto life*. (both given by the Spirit of the Gospel, and to be tried by the Rule of the Gospel) This is given for thy relief. As you see sometimes in the high-way (where the waters are too deep for travellers,) you have a foot-bridge or Causey, by which they may scape the flood, and safely passe on; so that none but such as have not eyes, or are drunk, will venture to go through the waters, when they may void the danger. Thou art a dead man, if thou think to answer thy sin with proportionable sorrow, thou wilt soon be above thy depth, and quackle thy self with thy own teares, but never get over the least sin thou committedst; go not on therefore as thou lovest thy life, but turn aside to this Gospel-path, and thou escapest the danger. O you tempted soules, when Satan saith you are not humbled enough, see where you may be relieved: *I am a Romane, (saith Paul) I appeal to Cesar.*

I am a Christian, (say) I appeal to Christs Law; and what is the Law of the Gospel concerning this? Heart-sorrow is Gospel-sorrow; *They were pricked in their heart*, and Peter (like on honest Chyrurgion) will not keep these bleeding Patients longer in pain with their wounds open; but presently claps on the healing plaister of the Gospel; *Believe in the Lord Jesus*. Now a prick to the heart is more than a wound to the conscience. The heart is the seat of life. Sin wounded there lies a dying. To do anything from the heart makes it acceptable, *Eph. 6. 6*. Now, poor soul, ^{2 Cor. 5. 11} hadst thou fate thus long in the devils stocks, if thou hadst understood this aright? doth thy heart clear or condemn thee, when in secret thou art bemoaning thy sin before God? if thy heart be false I cannot help you no, not the Gospel it self, but if ^{1 Joh. 3. 21} sincere, thou hast boldnesse with God.

A second argument Satan useth, is this: He whose sorrow falls short of theirs, that never truly repented, he is not humbled enough. But, soul, thy sorrow falls short of some, that never truly repented; Ergo. Well, the first proposition is true, but how will Satan prove his *minor*? Thus, *Ahab* he took on for his sin, and went in sack-cloath. *Judas* he made bitter complaint. O (saith Satan) didst thou not know such a one that lay under terrour of conscience, walking in a sad mournful condition so many moneths, and every one took him for the greatest convert the countrey? and yet he at last fell foully, & proved an Apostate; but thou never didst feel such smart, passe so many weary nights and dayes in mourning and bitter lamentation as he hath done therefore thou fallest short of one that fell short of repentance. And truly this is a sad stumbling block to a soul in an hour of temptation. Like a ship sunck in the mouth of the harbour which is more dangerous to others than if it had perisht in the open sea. There is lesse scandall by the sins of the wicked, who sink (as it were) in the broad sea of profanenesse, than in those who are convinced of sin, troubled in conscience, & miscarry so near the harbour, within sight, as it were of saving grace. Tempted souls can hardly get over these without dashing. Am I better than such a one that proved naught at last? Now to help thee a little to finde out the fallacy of this argument, we must distinguish between the terrours that accompany sorrow, and the intrinsecal nature of this grace. The first which

are accessory may be separated from the other, as the raging of the sea, which is caused by the winde from the sea, when the winde is down. From this distinction take two Conclusions.

1. First, one may fall short of an hypocrite in the terrours that sometimes accompany sorrow, and yet have the truth of this grace, which the other with all his terrours wants. Christians run into many mistakes, by judging rather according to that which is accessory, then that which is essential to the nature of duties and graces. Sometimes thou hearest one pray with a moving expression (while thou canst hardly get out a few broken words in duty,) and thou art ready to accuse thy self and to admire him; as if the gilt of the Key made it open the door the better; thou seest another abound with joy which thou wantest, and art ready to conclude his grace more and thine less, whereas thou mayest have more real grace, only thou wantest a light to shew thee where it lies. Take heed of judging by accessories, perhaps thou hast not heard so much of the rattling of the chains of hell, nor in thy conscience the out-cries of the damned, to make thy flesh tremble, but hast thou not seen that in a bleeding Christ which hath made thy heart melt & mourn, yea, loath and hate thy lusts more than the devil himself? Truly (Christian) 'tis strange, to heare a Patient complain of his Physitian, (when he findes his Physick work effectually, to the evacuating of his distempered humours, and the restoring his health) meerly because he was not so sick as some others with the working of it; Soul, thou hast more reason to be blessing God that the convictions of his spirit wrought so kindly on thee, to effect that in thee, without those terrours which have cost others so dear.

2. Secondly, this is so weak an argument, that contrariwise the more the terrors are, the less the sorrow is for sin while they remain. These are indeed preparatory sometimes to sorrow, they go before this grace as austere John before meek Jesus. But as John went down when Christ went up, his increase was Johns decrease; so as truly godly sorrow goes up, these terrors goe down. As the winde gathers the clouds, but those clouds seldom melt into a set rain, until the winde falls that gathered them: so these terrors raise the clouds of our sins in our consciences, but when these

these sins melt into godly sorrow, this laies the storme presently; indeed, as the loud windes blew away the rain, so these terrours do keep off the soul from this Gospel sorrow. While the creature is making an out-cry, 'tis damnd, 'tis damnd, it is taken up so much with the fear of hell, that sin as sin, (which is the proper object of godly sorrow) is little look't on or mourned for. A Murderer condemned to die, is so possit with the fear of death, and thought of the gallows, that there lies the slain body (it may be) before him, unlamented by him: but when his pardon is brought, then he can bestow his tears freely on his murdered friend; *they shall look on him whom they have peirced, and mourne.* Faith is the eye, this eye (beholding its sin peircing Christ, and Christ pardoning its sin) affects the heart, the heart affected sighs, these inward clouds melt and run from the eye of faith in tears: and all this is done when there is no tempest of terrour upon the spirit, but a sweet serenity of love and peace: and therefore, Christian, see how Satan abuseth thee, when he would perswade thee thou art not humbled enough, because thy sorrow is not attended with these legal terrours.



CHAP. VI.

A brief Application of the second

Branch of the Point, viz. Of Satans subtilty as a Troubler and accuser for sin.

IS Satan so subtile to trouble the Saints peace? This proves them to be the children of Satan, who shew the same Art and subtilty in vexing the spirits of the Saints, as doth their infernal father: Not to speak of bloody Persecutors, who are the devils slaughter-slaves to butcher the Saints, but of those who more slyly trouble and molch the Saints peace.

Use 1.

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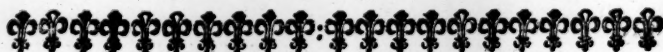
First,

1. First, such as rake up the Saints old sins, which God hath forgiven and forgotten, (meerly to grieve their spirits and bespatter their names,) these shew their divelish malice indeed, who can take such pains to travel many years back, that they may finde a handful of dirt to throw on the Saints face. Thus *Shimei* twitted *David*, *Come out thou bloody man*. When you that feare God meet with such reproaches, answer them as *Beza* did the Papists, who for want of other matter charged him for some wanton Poems penn'd by him in his youth, *Hi homunciones invident mihi gratiam Dei*. These men (saith he) grudge me the pardoning mercy of God.
2. Secondly, such as watch for the Saints halting, and catch at every infirmity to make them odious, and themselves merry. 'Tis a dreadful curse such bring upon themselves, (though they little think of it) no lesse than *Amalek*, the remembrance of
 Deut. 25. whose name, God threatened to blot from under heaven; why what
 19 had *Amalek* done to deserve this? They smote the hindermost, those that were feeble, and could not march with the rest. And was it so great a cruelty to doe this? Much more to smite with the edge of a mocking tongue the feeble in grace.
3. Thirdly, such who father their sins upon the Saints, thus *Abab* calls the Prophet *the Troubler of Israel*, when it was himself and his fathers house. What a grief was it, think you to *Moses* his spirit, for the *Israelites* to lay the bloud of those that died in the wilderness at his door? Whereas (God knows) he was their constant Baile, when at any time Gods hand is up to destroy them: And this was the charge which the best of Gods servants in this crooked generation of ours lie under: We may thank them (say the profane) for all our late miseries in the Nation: we were well enough till they would reforme us. O for shame, blame not the good Physick that was administred, but the corrupt body of the Nation that could not bear it.
4. Fourthly, such as will themselves sin, meerly to trouble the Saints spirit. Thus *Rabsakeb* blasphemed, and when desired to speake in an other language, he goes on the more to grieve them. Sometimes you shall have a profane wretch (knowing one to be consciencious, and cannot brook to hear the Name of God raken in vain, or the wayes of God, flouted,) wil on purpose fall upon such discourse as shall grate his chaste ears, & trouble his
 gracious

gracious spirit, such a one strikes father and childe at one blow, think it not enough to dishonour God, except the Saint stand's by to see and heare the wrong done to his heavenly Father.

Secondly, This may afford matter of admiration and thankfulness to any of you, (O ye Saints) who are not at this day under Satans hatches. Is he so subtil to disquiet, and hast thou any peace in thy conscience? To whom art thou beholden for that serenity that is on thy spirit? to none but thy God, under whose wing thou sittest so warme and safe. Is there not combustible matter enough in thy conscience for his sparks to kindle? Perhaps thou hast not committed such bloody sins as others: that's not the reason of thy peace, for the least is big enough to damne much more to trouble thee. Thou hast not grossly fallen (may be) since Conversion, that's rare, (if thou beest of long standing) yet the ghosts of thy unregenerate sins might walke in thy conscience: thou hast had many testimonies of Gods favour, hast thou not? who more then *David*? yet he at a losse sometimes learning to spell his evidences, as if he could never have read them. The sence of Gods love comes and goes with the present tast. He that is in the dark (while there) sees not the more for former light. O bleſs God for that light which shines in at thy window; Satan is plotting to undermine thy comfort every day. This Thief sees thy pleasant fruits as they hang, and his teeth water at them, but the wall is too high for him to climbe; thy God keeps this Serpent out of thy Paradise. 'Tis not the grace of God in thee, but the favour of God, as a shield about thee, defends the from thee wicked one.

Thirdly, let Satans subtilty to molest your peace, make thee, (O Christian) more wise and wary, thou hast not a fool to deale with, but one that hath wit enough to spill thy comfort, and spoil thy joy, if not narrowly watcht, this is the dainy bit he gapes for; 'tis not harder to keep the flies out of your cup-boards in Summer, from tainting your provision, then Satan out of your consciences; many a sweet meal hath he robbed the Saints of, and sent them supperlesse to bed; take heed therefore that he roams not thine away also.



CHAP. VII.

*Containing some Directions, tending
to entrench and fortifie the Christian against the assaults
and wiles of the devil, as a Troubler of the soules Peace.*

Quest. **H**ow shall I stand in a defensive posture (may the Christian say)
against these wiles of Satan as a Troubler?

SECT. I.

Ans^w. 1. First, if thou wouldest be guarded from him as a Troubler, take heed of him as a seducer. The haft of Satans hatchet, (with which he lies chopping at the root of the Christians comfort) is commonly made of the Christians wood: First, he tempts to sin, and then for it. Satan is but a creature, and cannot work without tooles, he can indeed make much of a little, but not any thing of nothing, as we see in his assaulting of Christ, where he troubled himself to little purpose, because *he came and found nothing in him*. Though the devil throws the stone, yet 'tis the mud in us which royles our comforts. 'Twas in vaine for the Philistines to fall on Samson till his lock was cut: take heed therefore of yielding to his enticing motions; these are the stumbling blocks, at which he hopes thou'lt break thy shins, and bruise thy conscience, which once done, let him alone to spin out the cure. Indeed a Saints flesh heals not so easily as others: drink not of the devils wassel, there is poyson in the cup, his wine is a *mock*er, look not on it as it sparkles in the temptation; what thou drinkest down with sweetnesse thou wilt be sure
to

1 Joh. 14. 30

to bring up again as gall and wormwood. Above all sins, take heed of presumptuous ones, thou art not out of the danger of such. See stories we have of Saints falls, and what follows? *Psal. 19. 13* then, Take him Jailor, (saith God,) *Deliver such a one unto Satan*; and if a Saint be the Prisoner, and the devil the keeper, you may guess how he shall be used. O how he will tear and rend thy conscience! Though that dreadful Ordinance is not used (as it should be) in the Church, yet Gods Court sits, and if he excommunicate a soul from his presence, he falls presently into Satans clutches. Well, if through his subtilty thou hast bin overtaken, take heed thou stayest not in the devils quarters: shake the viper off thy hand. ply thee to thy Chyrurgion: green woun is cure best, but if thou neglectest, and the wound get to it, thy conscience will soon fester. *Ahab* (we read) was wounded in battel, and was loath to yield to it, (it is said) *he was held up in his chariot*, but he died for it: When a soule hath received a wound, committed a sin, Satan labours to boulder him up with flattering hopes, holds him up, as it were, in his chariot against God; what yield for this? afraid for a little scratch, and loose the spoile of thy future pleasure for this? O take heed of listening to such counsel, the sooner thou yieldest, the fairer quarter thou shalt have. Every step in this way lets thee further from thy peace. A rent garment is catch't by every nail, and the rent made wider. Renew therefore thy repentance speedily, whereby this reach may be made up, and worse prevented, which else will befall thee.

*1 Kings 22
35.*

SECT. II

2 ly, study that grand Gospel-truth of a souls Justification before God, acquaint thy self with this in all its causes: the moving cause the free mercy of God, being justified freely by his grace, the meritorious, which is the blood of Christ; & the instrument, I, faith, with all the sweet priviledges that flow from it. An effectual door once open'd to let the soul into this truth, would not only spoil the Popes market (as *Gardner* said) but the devils also; when Satan comes to disquiet the Christians peace, (for want of a right understanding here) he is soon worsted by his enemy: as the silly hare

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Rom. 3. 24.

which might escape the dogs in some covert or burrough that is at hand, but (trusting to her heels) is by the print of her owne feet and scent, which he leaves behinde, followed, till at last (weary and spent) she falls into the mouth of them. In all that a Christian doth, there is a print of sinful infirmity, & a scent by which Satan is enabled to trace and pursue him over hedge and ditch, this grace and that duty, till the soule, not able to stand before the accusation of Satan, is ready to fall down in despair at his feet: Whereas here's a hiding place, whether the enemy durst not come, the clefts of the rock, the hole of the staires, which this truth leads unto. When Satan chargeth thee for a sinner, perhaps thou interposst thy repentance and reformation, but soon art beaten out of those works, (when thou art shewen the sinful mixtures that are in them) whereas this truth would choke all his bullets, that thou believest on him who hath said,

Rom. 4.5. *Not unto him that worketh, but unto him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed for righteousness. Get therefore into this tower of the Gospel-Covenant, and rowle this truth, (as the that stone on the head of Abimelech) on the head of Satan.*

SECT. III.

3: Thirdly, be sure (Christian) thou keepest the Plains. Take heed that Satan coop thee not up in some streights, where thou canst neither well fight, nor fly. Such a trap the Egyptian hoped they had the Israelites in, when they cried, *They are entangled, they are entangled.* There are three kindes of straits wherein he labours to entrap the Christians; Nice Questions, obscure Scriptures, and dark providences.

First, he labours to puzzle him with nice and scrupulous questions, (on purpose to retard the work, and clog him in his motion) that meeting with such intricacies in his Christian course, which he cannot easily resolve, thereby he may be made, either to give over, or go on heavily: therefore we have particular charge not to trouble the weak heads of young converts with

Rom. 14.1. *doubtful disputations.* Sometimes Satan will be asking the soule, how it knowes its election: And where he findes one not so fully

fully resolved, as to dare to own the same, he frames his Argument against such a ones closing with Christ & the promise; as if it were presumption to assume that, which is the onely portion of the elect) before we know our selves of that number. Now, Christian, keep the Plaines and thou art safe. 'Tis plain, we are not to make Election a ground for our faith, but our faith and calling a *medium* or argument to prove our Election. Election indeed is first in order of divine acting. God chooseth before we beleeve; yet faith is first in our acting. We must believe before we can know we are elected, yea, by believing we know it. The Husbandman knowes 'tis spring by the sprouting of the grasse, though he hath no Astro'logy to know the Position of the Heavens; thou mayest know thou art Elect, as surely by a work of grace in thee, as if thou hadst stood by Gods elbow when he writ thy name in the book of life. It had been presumption for *David* to have thought he should have been King, till *Samuel* anointed him, but then none at all; when thou believest first, and closeth with Christ, then is the Spirit of God sent to anoint thee to the Kingdom of Heaven: this is that holy oyle which is poured upon none but heires of glory; and 'tis no presumption to read what Gods gracious purpose was towards thee of old, when he prints those his thoughts, and makethem legible in thy effectual calling; here thou dost not go up to heaven, and pray into Gods secrets, but heaven comes down to thee: and reveals them. Again, he will ask the Christian what was the time of his Conversion; Art thou a Christian (will he say) and dost thou not know when thou commencedst? now keep the Plains, & content thy self with this, that thou seest the streams of grace, though the time of thy Conversion be like the head of *Nylus*, not to be found. God oft comes berimes, before grosse sins have deflowered the soule, and steals into the creatures bosome without much noise. In such a case Satan doth but abuse thee when he sends thee on this errand; you may know the Sun is up, though you did not observe when it rose. Again, what will become of thee (saith Satan) if God should bring thee into such an affliction or trial, when thou must burn or turn or when all thy outward estate shall be rent from thee, no meal in the barrel, no money in the purse; dar'st thou have so good an opinion of thy selfe, as to think that thy faith will hold out in

such an houre of temptation? If thou hast but half an eye, Christian, thou mayest see what Satan drives at: this is an ensnaring question; by the feare of future troubles he labours to bring thee into a neglect of thy present duty, and indisposes thee also for such a state when ever it falls. If a man hath much businessse to do on the morrow, 'tis his wisdom to discharge his minde thereof, (when composing to sleep) lest the thoughts thereof break his rest, and make him the more unfit in the morning. The lesse rest the soul hath in God and his promise concerning future events, the lesse strength it will finde to beare them when the pinch comes. When therefore thou art molested with such feares, pacifie thy heart with these three plain conclusions.

First, every event is the profluit of Gods providence, not a sparrow, much lesse a Saint falls to the ground by poverty, sickness, persecution, &c. but the hand of God is in it.

Secondly, God hath out in creation *he will never leave thee, nor forsake thee* He that enables thee in one condition, will in another. God teaches his servants their whole trade: Grace is an universal principle. At the first moment of thy spiritual life suffering grace was infused as well as praying grace.

Heb. 13. 5.

Thirdly, God is wise to conceal the succours he intends in the several changes of thy life: that so he may draw thy heart into an entire dependance on his faithful promise. Thus to trye the mettall of *Abrahams* faith he let him go on, till his hand was stretch't forth, and then he comes to his rescue. Christ sends his disciples to sea, but stays behinde himself, on a design to try their faith, and shew his love. Comfort thy self therefore with this, though thou seeest not thy God in the way, yet thou shalt finde him in the end.

2.

Secondly, Satan perplexeth the tender consciences of doubting Christians, with obscure Scriptures, whose sense lies too deep for their weak and distempered judgments, readily to finde out, and with these he humpers poor souls exceedingly; indeed as melancholly men delight in melancholly walks, so doubting souls most frequent such places of scripture in their musing thoughts, as increase their doubts; how many have I known that have look't so long on those difficult places, *Heb. 6. 7. Heb. 10. 26.* (which passe the understanding, as a swift stream the eye, so that

that the sense is not perceived without great observation,) till their heads have turned round, and they at last (not able to untie the difficulties,) have fallen down in disparaging thoughts and words of their own condition, crying out, O they have sinned against knowledge of the truth, and therefore no mercy remains for them: who if they would have refreshed their understandings by looking off these places, (whose engraving is too curious to be long pored on by a weak eye,) they might have found that in other Scriptures plainly exprest, which would have enabled them, as through a glasse, more safely to have viewed these? Therefore, Christian, keepe the Plaines; thou mayest be sure 'tis thine enemy that gives thee such stones to breake thy teeth, when thy condition calls rather for bread and wine, which Scriptures, I mean, as are most apt to nourish thy faith, and cheere thy drooping spirit. When thou meetest such plain Scriptures which speak to thy case, go over where it is forbidden, and do not venture beyond thy depth. Art thou afraid because thou hast sinned since the knowledge of the truth, and therefore no sacrifice remains for thee? See *David* and *Peter's* case, how it patterns thine, and left upon record that their recovery may be a Key in thine hand to open such places as these; mayest thou not safely conclude from these, this is not their meaning, that none can be saved that sin after knowledge? In seeing in both those places, it is neither meant of the falls of such as ever had true grace, nor of a falling away in some particular acts of sin, but of a total universal falling away from the Faith, (the doctrine of it as well as seeming practise of it) Now if the root of the matter were ever in thee, other Scriptures will first comfort thee against those particular apostasies into which thou hast relapsed, by sweet promises inviting such to return, and Precedents of Saints, who have had peace spoken to them after such folly, and also they will arise thee against the other, by giving full security to thy faith, that thy little grave shall not die, being immortal, though not in its proper essence, because but a creature, yet by Covenant, as it is a childe of Promise

Thirdly, Dark Providences. From these Satan disputes against Gods love to, and grace in a soule. First, he got a commission to plunder *Job* of his temporal estate, and bereave him of his children

3.

children, and then let ours to make him question his Spirituall estate and sonship; his wife would have him entertain hard thoughts of God, (saying, *Curse God and die.*) and his friends as hard thoughts of himself, (as if he were an hypocrite) and both upon the same mistake, as if such an afflicted condition and a gracious state were inconsistent. Now (Christian) keep the Plaines, and neither from this charge Go! foolishly for thine enemy, nor thy self as his. Reade the saddest Providence with the Comment of the Word, and thou canst not make such an harsh interpretation. As God can make a streight line with a crooked stick, be righteous when he useth wicked instruments; so also gracious when he dispenseth harsh Providences. *Joseph* kept his love, when he spake roughly to his brethren. I do not wonder that the wicked think they have Gods blessing, because they are in the warme Sun: Alas, they are strangers to Gods counsels, void of his Spirit, and sensual, judging of God and his Providence, by the report their present feeling makes of them like little children, who think every one loves them that gives them plums. But 'tis strange, that a Saint should be at a losse for his afflicted state, when he hath a Key to decipher Gods character: Christian, hath not God secretly instructed thee by his Spirit from the Word, how to reade the short-hand of his Providence? dost not thou know that the Saints afflictions stand for blessings? *Every son whom he loves he corrects;* and prosperity in a wicked state, must it not be read a curse? doth not God damne such to be rich, honourable, victorious in this world, as well as to be tormented in another world? God gives them more of the evil then they seem to desire sometimes, and all to binde them faster up in a deep sleep of security, as *Jaels* served *Sisera*, he shall have *milk* though he asked but *water*, that she might nail him the surer to the ground. Milk having a property (as some write) to encline to sleep.

Judg. 5. 25.

SECT. IV.

4. Fourthly, be careful to keep thy old receipts which thou hast had from God for the pardon of thy sins. There are some gaudy
dayes,

dayes, an^d Jubilee-like Festivals, when Go^d comes forth clothed with the robes of his mercy, and holds forth the Scepter of his grace more familiarly to his children then ordinary be ring witness to their faith, sincerity, &c. an^d then the firmament is clear, not a cloud to be seen to darken the Christians comfort. Love an^d joy are the soles repast and pastime, while this feast lasts. Now when God withdrawes, and this cheer is taken off, Satans work is how he may deface and weare off the remembrance of this testimony, which the soul so triumphs in for its spiritual standing, that he may not have it as an evidence when he shall bring about the suite again, and put the soul to produce his writings for his spiritual state or renounce his claim. It behoves thee therefore to lay them up safely: such a testimony may serve to non-suit thy accuser many years hence; one affirmative from Gods mouth for thy present state, carries more weight (though of old date) than a thousand negatives from Satans. *David's Songs of old* spring in with a light to his soul in his mid-night sorrowes.

But what counsel would you give me (saith the distressed soul) *Quest.* who cannot fasten on my former comforts, nor dare to vouch those evidences, which once I thought true? I finde indeed there have been some treaties of old between God and my soul; some hopes have had, but the^{se} are now so defaced and interlined with back-slidings, repentances, and falls again, that now I question all my evidences, whether true or counterfeit, what should one in this case doe?

First, renew thy repentance, as if thou hadst never repented. *Ans^r.* Put forth fresh acts of faith, as if thou hadst never believed, This seriously done will stop Satans mouth with an unexpected answer. Let him object against thy former actions as hypocritical, what can he say against thy present repenting and believing, which if true, sets thee beyond his shot. It will be harder for Satan to disprove the present workings of Gods gracious Spirit, whilst the impressions thereof are fresh, then to pick an hole in thy old deeds and evidences. Acts are transient, an^d as wicked men look at sins committed many years since, as little or none, by reason of that breadth of time which interposeth; so the Christian upon the same account stands at great disadvantage, to take the true aspect of those acts of grace, which so long

long ago pass'd between God and him; though sometimes even these are of great use. As God can make a sinner possess the sins of his youth, as if they were newly acted to his honour in his old age; so God can present the comforts and evidences which of old the Saint received, with those very thoughts he had then of them, as if they were fresh and new.

2. And therefore secondly; If yet he haunts thee with the fears of thy spiritual estate, ply thee to the throne of grace, and beg a new copy of thy old evidence, which thou hast lost. The Original is in the Pardon Office in Heaven, whereof Christ is Master; if thou beest a Saint thy name is upon record in that Court; make thy moan to God, hear what news from Heaven, rather than listen to the tales which are brought by thine enemy from Hell. Did such reason leste with Satan, and pray over their fears more to God, they might sooner be resolved. Can you expect truth from a liar, and comfort from an enemy? Did he ever prophesie well of believers? was not *Job* the 'evils hypocrite, whom God vouch't for a non such in holiness, and prov'd him so at last? If he knew thou wert a Saint, would he tell thee so? If an hypocrite, he would be as loath thou shouldst know it; turn thy back therefore on him; and go to thy God: fear not; but sooner or later he will give his hand again to thy Certificate. But look thou doest not rashly passe a censure on thy self, because a satisfactory answer is not presently sent at thy desire; the Messenger may stay long, and bring good news at last.

3. Thirdly, shun battell with thine enemy while thou art in a fitter posture; and that thou mayest draw into thy trenches, and make an honourable retreat into thine fastnesses and strengths, which Christ hath provided for his sick and wounded soldiers. Now there are two places of advantage into which deserv'd souls may retire; the Name of God, and the absolute Promises of the Gospel; these I may call the fair Havens, which are then chiefly of use, when the storm is so great that the ship cannot live at sea. O, saith Satan, dost thou hope to see God? none but the pure in heart shall be blest with that vision. Think'st thou to have comfort? That is the portion of the mourners in spirit. Now, soul, though thou canst not say (in the hurry of temptation) thou art the pure and the mourner in spirit, yet then

then say thou believest God is able to work these in thee, yea, hath promised such a mercy to poor sinners, 'tis his Covenant, (*He will give a new heart, a clean heart, a soft heart,*) and here I wait, knowing, as there was nothing in the creature to move the great God to make such promises; so there can be nothing in the creature to hinder the Almighty his performance of them, where and when he pleaseth. This act of faith, accompanied with a longing desire after that grace thou canst not yet finde, and an attendance on the meanes, though it will not fully satisfie all thy doubts, (may be) yet will keep thy head above water, that thou despairest not; and such a shore thou need'st in this case, or the house falls.

Fourthly, if yet Satan dogs thee, call in help, and keep not the devils counsell. The very strength of some temptations lies in the concealing of them, and the very revealing of them to some faithful friend, (like the opening and pricking of an imposthume) gives the soul present ease: Satan knowes this too well; and therefore, as some thieves, when they come to rob an house, either gagge them in it, or hold a pistol to their breast, frightening them with death, if they cry or speak: Thus Satan that he may more freely rifle the soul of its peace and comfort, over-awes it so, that it dares not disclose his temptation. O, saith Satan, if thy brethren or friends know such a thing by thee, they'l cast thee off, others will hoot at thee. Thus many a poor soul hath been kept long in its pangs by biting them in; thou lovest (Christian) a double help by keeping the devils secret, the counsel and prayers of thy fellow-brethren; and what an invaluable losse is this?



CHAP. VIII.

*Of the Saints victory over their sub-
tile enemy, and whence it is that creatures so over-
match't should be able to stand against Satans wiles.*

THe second Branch of the Apostles Argument followes, to excite them the more vigourously to their armes; and that is from the possibility, yea, certainty of standing against this subtile enemy, if thus arm'd, *That yee may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* So that this gives the Apostles argument its due temperament: For he meant not to scare them into a cowardly flight, or sullen dispair of victory, when he tells them their enemy is so subtile and politick: But to excite them to a vigorous resistance, from the assured hope of strength to stand in battel, and victoriously after it; which two I conceive are comprehended in that phrase, standing against the wiles of Satan. Sometimes to stand implies a fighting posture; so *verse 14.* Sometimes a conquering posture, *Job 19. 25. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.* That earth which was the field, where all the bloody battels were fought betwixt him and Satan, on it shall he stand, when not an enemy shall dare to shew his head. So that taking both these in: The Observation is,

Doff.

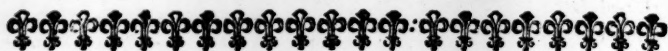
Satan with all his wits and wiles shall never vanquish a soule, arm'd with true grace; nay, he that hath this armour of God on shall vanquish him. Look into the Word, you shall not finde a Saint, but hath been in the list with him, sifted and winnowed more or lesse by this enemy, yet at last we finde them all coming off with an honourable victory: As in *David, Job, Peter, Paul,* who

who were the hardest put to it of any upon record, & least some should attribute their victory to the strength of their inherent grace, above other of their weaker brethren, you have the glory of their victories appropriated to God, in whom the weak are as strong as the strongest. We shall give a double Reason of this truth, why the Christian who seemes to be so over-matcht, ^{2 Cor. 12. 9} ^{Jam. 5. 11.} is yet so unconquerable.

First, the curse that lies upon Satan and his cause. Gods curse *Reas. 1.* blasts where ever it comes. The *Canaanites* with their neighbour Nations were *bread* for *Israel*, though people famous for war; and why? They were cursed Nations. The *Egyptians* a polittick people; *Let us deal wisely*, say they) yet being cursed of God; this lay like a thorne at their heart, and was at last their ruine: yea, let the *Israelites* themselves, (who carry the badge of Gods Covenant on their flesh) by their sins once become the people of Gods curse, and they are trampled like dirt under the *Assyrians* feet. This made *Balak* beg so hard for a curse upon *Israel*, Now there is an irrevokable curse cleaves to Satan from *Gen. 3. 14, 15.* And the Lord said to the Serpent, *Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed, &c.* which place, though partly meant of the literal serpent, yet chiefly of the devil & the wicked, (his spiritual serpentine brood) as appears by the enmity *Iſa. 10. 5.* pronounced against the Serpents seed and the womans, which clearly holds forth the feud between Christ with his seed, against the devil and his. Now there are two things in that curse which may comfort the Saints. First, the curse prostrates Satan under their feet: *Vpon thy belly shalt thou go*, which is no more then is elsewhere promised, that God will subdue Satan under our feet. Now this prostrate condition of Satan assures believers that the devil shall never lift his head (that is, his wily policy) higher then the Saints heele. He may make thee limp, but not bereave thee of thy life, and this bruise which he gives thee shall be rewarded with the breaking of his own head, that is, the utter ruine of him and his cause. Secondly, his food is here limited and appointed. Satan shall not devour whom he will. The dust is his food, which seemes to restrain his power to the wicked, who are of the earth earthy, meere dust; but for those who are of a heavenly extraction, their graces are reserved for Christs food, *Cant. 7. 13.* and their souls surely are not a morsel for the devils tooth.

The second reason is taken from the wisdom of God, who as he undertakes the ordering of the Christians way to heaven, *Pf. 37. 24.* so especially this businesse of Satans temptations. We finde Christ was not led of the evilspirit into the wildernesse to be tempted, but of the Holy Spirit, *Mat. 4. 1.* Satan tempts not when he will, but when God pleaseth: and the same *Holy Spirit* which led Christ into the field, brought him off with victory. And therefore we find him marching in the *Power of his Spirit* (after he had repulsed Satan) into *Galilee. Luke 4. 14.* When Satan tempts a Saint, he is but Gods messenger, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* *There was given to me a thorne in the flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet me.* So our Translation. But rather as Beza, who will have it in *casu recto*, the Messenger Satan, implying that he was sent of God to Paul; And indeed the errand he came about was too good and gracious to be his own, *Left I should be exalted above measure*; The devil never meant to do Paul such a good office: but God sends him to Paul, as David sent Uriah with letters to Joab, neither knew the contents of their message. The devil and his instruments both are Gods instruments, therefore the wicked are called his *sword, his axe*: now let God alone to wield the one and handle the other. He is but a bungler that hurts and hackles his own legs with his own axe; which God should do, if his children should be the worse for Satans temptations. Let the devil choose his way, God is for him at every weapon. If he'll try it by force of armes, and assault the Saints by persecution, as the *Lord of Hostes*, he will oppose him. If by policy and subtilty, he is ready there also. The devil and his whole counsel are but fooles to God. Nay, their wisdom, foolishnesse, Cunning and Art commend every thing but sinne. The more artificial the watch, the picture, &c. the better; but the more wit and Art in sin, the worse, because it is employed against an All-wise God, that cannot be out-witted, and therefore will in the end but pay the workmen in greater damnation. The foolishnesse of God is wiser then men, yea, then the wisdom of men and devils, that is, the meanes and instruments which God opposeth Satan withal. What weaker then a Sermon? who slier then the Saints in the account of the wise world? yet God is wiser in a weak Sermon, then Satan is in his deep plots (wherin the State heads of a whole Conclave of profound Cardinals are knock't;

knock't together:) wiser in his simple ones, then Satan in his *Aschitophels* and *Sanballats*; and truly God chooseth on purpose to defeat the policies of hell and earth by these, that he may put such to greater shame; 1 Cor. 1. 21. How is the great Scholar ashamed to be baffled by a plain Countrey-mans argument? thus God calls forth *Job* to wrestle with Satan and his Seconds, (for such his three friends shewed themselves in taking the devils part) and sure he is not able to hold up the cudgels against the fencing Master, who is beaten by one of the scholars. God sits laughing while hell and earth sit plotting: *Psal.* 2. 4. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty*, he breaketh their studied thoughts and plots, as the words import, *Job* 5. 12. in one moment pulling down the labours of many yeares policy. Indeed as great men keep wilde beasts for game and sport, (as the fox, the boare, &c.) so doth God Satan and his instruments, to manifest his wisdom in the taking of them. It is observed, that the very hunting of some beasts affords not only pleasure to the Hunter, but also more sweetnesse to the eater. Indeed God by displaying of his wisdom in the pursuit of the Saints enemies doth superadde a sweet relish to their deliverance at last. *He brake the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat to his people.* After he had hunted *Pharaoh* out of all his formes and burrowes, now he breaks the very braines of all his plots, and serves him up to his people, with the garnishment of his wisdom and power about.



CHAP. IX.

*An account is given, how the All-wise
God doth out-wit the devill in his*

*tempting of Saints to sin, wherein are laid down the
ends Satan propounds, and how he is prevented in
them all, with the gracious issue that God puts to
these his temptations.*

Quest.

But how doth God defeat Satan, and out-wit his wiles in tempting his Saints?

Ans.

This God doth by accomplishing his own gracious ends for the good and comfort of his people out of those temptations from which Satan designs their ruine, this is the noblest kinde of Conquest, to beat back the devils weapon to the wounding of his own head, yea, to cut it off with the devils own sword; thus God sets the devil to catch the devil, and layes, as it were, his own counsels under Satans wings, and makes him hatch them: Thus the Patriarchs help't to fulfil *Josephs* dream, while they are thinking to rid their hands of him. To instance in a few particulars,

SECT. I.

1. First, Satan by his temptations aimes at the defiling of the Christians conscience, and disfiguring that beautiful face of Gods image, which is engraven with holiness in the Christians bosome, he is an unclean spirit himselfe, and would have them such that he might glory in their shame; but God out-wits him, for he turneth the temptations of Satan to sin, to the purging them from sin; they are the *black soap* with which God washeth his Saints *white*.

First,

1. First, God useth the temptations of Satan to one sin, as a preventive against another; so *Pauls thorn in the flesh* to prevent his pride. God sends Satan to assault Paul on that side where he is strong, that in the mean time he may fortifie him where he is weak. Thus Satan is befool'd, as sometimes we see an army sitting down before a town, where it waits its strength to no purpose, and in the mean time gives the enemy an advantage to recruit; and all this by the counsel of some *Hushai*, that is a secret friend to the contrary side: God, who is the Saints true friend, sits in the devils counsel, & over-rules proceedings there to the Saints advantage; he suffers the devil to annoy the Christian with temptations to blasphemy, atheisme, & with these, together with the troubles of spirit they produce; the soul is driven to duty, is humbled in the sense of these horrid apparitions in its imagination, and secured from abundance of formality and pride, which otherwise God saw invading him. As in a family, some business falls out, which keeps the Master up later than ordinary, and by this the thief, who that night intended to rob him, is disappointed; had not such a soul had his spirit of prayer and diligence kept awake by those afflicting temptations, 'tis likely Satan might have come as a seducer, and taken him napping in security.

2. Secondly, God purgeth out the very sin Satan tempts to, even by his tempting. Peter never had such a conquest over his self-confidence, never such an establishment of his faith, as after his soul fell in the High Priests hall. He that was so well persuaded of himself before, as to say, Though all were offended with Christ, yet would not he, how modest and humble was he in a few dayes become, when he durst not say he loved Christ more than his fellow-brethren, to whom before he had preferred himself? what an undaunted Confessor of Christ and his Gospel doth he prove before Counsels and Rulers, who even now was dash't out of countenance by a silly maid? and all this the product of Satans temptation sanctified unto him. Indeed a Saint hath a discovery by his fall, what is the prevailing corruption in him, so that the temptation doth but stir the humor, which the soul having found out, hath the greater advantage to evacuate, by applying those means, and using those ingredients which doe purge that malady *cum delectu*. Now the soule sure will call all

out

out against this destroyer? *Paul* had not took such pains to buffet his body, had he not found *Satan* knocking at that door.

3. Thirdly, God useth these temptations for the advancing of the whole work of grace in the heart. One spot occasions the whole garment to be washed. *David* overcome with one sin, renews his repentance for all, *Psal* 51. A good husband when he seeth it rain at one place, sends for the Workman to look over all the house. This indeed differenceth a sincere heart from an hypocrite, whose repentance is partial, soft in one plot, and hard in an other. *Judas* cries out of his treason, but not a word of his thievery and hypocrisy. The hole was no wider in his conscience than where the bullet went in, whereas true sorrow for one, breaks the heart into shivers for others also.

SECT. II

2. Secondly, *Satan* by tempting one Saint hath a mischievous design against others, either by encouraging them to sin by the example of such a one, or discouraging them in their holy course by the scandal he hath given; but God here befooles him.

1. First, making the miscarriages of such a seasonable caveat to others to look to their standing. Dost thou see a meek *Moses* provok't to anger, what watch and ward hast thou need keep over thy unruly heart? Though loud winds do some hurt by blowing down here a loose tile, and there a turret, (which was falling before,) yet the common good surmounts the private damage of some few; these being as a broom in Gods hand to sweep and cleanse the ayre: So though some (that are wicked) are by Gods righteous judgment for the same hardned into further abominations by the Saints fals, yet the good which sincere soules receive by having their formality and security in a further degree purged doth abundantly countervaille the other, who are but sent a little faster, whether they were going before.

2. Secondly, God makes his Saints fals an argument for comfort to distressed consciences. This hath been, and is as a feather, (when

(when the passage seems so stop't, that no comfort can be got down otherwise) to drop a little hope into the soul, to keep the creature alive from falling into utter despair; some have I in revive with this, when next door to hell in their own fears. *David's* sin was great, yet found mercy: *Peter* fell foully, yet now in heaven. Why fittest thou here, O my soul under the hatches of despair? Up and call upon thy God for mercy, who hath pardoned the same to others.

Thirdly, God hath a design in suffering Satan to trounce some of his Saints by temptation, to train them up in a fittestness to succour their fellow-brethren in the like condition: He sends them hither to school, (where they are under Satans ferular and lash) that his cruel hand over them may make them study the Word and their own hearts, by which they get experience of Satans policies, till at last they commence Masters in this Art of comforting tempted souls. It is an Art by it self, to speak a word in season to the wearie soul: 'Tis not serving out an Apprenticeship to humane Arts will furnish a man for this: Great Doctors have proved very dunces here, knowing no more how to handle a wounded conscience than a Rustick the Chirurgions instrument in dissecting the body when an Anatomy-Lecture is to be read: 'Tis not the knowledge of the Scripture (though a man were as well acquainted with it, as the Apothecary with his pots and glasses in his shop; able to go directly to any promise on a sudden,) will suffice. No, not grace it self, except exercise I with these buffetings and soul conflicts. Christ himself we finde trained up at this school, *Isa* 50 4. *He wakeneth mine eare to hear as the learned.* Even as the Tutor calls up his Pupil to read to him; and what is the Lecture which is read to Christ, that he may have the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to the weary souls? see, *vers* 5. *The Lord hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious, neither turned I away my back, I gave my back to the smiters, &c.* His sufferings (which were all along mingled with temptations,) were the Lecture from which Christ came out so learned, to resolve and comfort distressed souls. So that the devil had better have let Christ alone, yea, & his Saints also, who do him but the greater disservice in comforting others; none will handle poor souls so gently as those, who remember the smart of their own heart-

3.

Sorrowes; none so skilful in applying the comforts of the Word to wounded consciences, as those who have layen bleeding themselves; such know the symptoms of soul-troubles, and feel others pains in their own bosomes, which some that know the Scriptures, (for lack of experience) do not, and therefore are like a novice Physician, who perhaps can tell you every plant in the Herbal, yet wanting the practick part, when a Patient comes, knowes not well how to make use of his skill: The Saints experiences help them to a sovereign treacle made of the Scorpions own flesh, (which they through Christ have slain) and that hath a vertue above all other to expel the venome of Satans temptations from the heart.

SECT. III.

3. Thirdly, Satan in tempting the Saint to sin, labours to make a breach between God and the soule. He hates both and therefore labours to divide these dear friends. If I can (thinks he) get such a one to sin, God will be angry, and when angry he'll whip his childe soundly, this will be some sport, and when God is correcting the Saint, he'll be questioning the love of God to him, and cooles in his love to God; so though I should not keep him from heaven at last, yet he shall have little joy thither in the way. In this case God and the soul will be like man and wife fallen out, who neither of them look kindly one upon another. Now see how God befooles Satan in both these.

1. First, God useth his Saints temptations, as his method by which he advanceth the communications of his love unto them. The devil thought he had got the goyle, when he got *Adam* to eate the forbidden fruit, he thought now he had man in the same predicament with himself, as unlikely ever to see the face of God, as those Apostate spirits; but (alas!) this was by God intended to usher in that great Gospel-plot of saving man by Christ, who (as soon as this prologue of mans fall is done) is brought upon the stage in that grand Promise of the Gospel made to *Adam*, and at Gods command undertakes the charge of recovering lost man out of Satans clutches, and re-inflating him
in

in his primitive glory, with an access of more then ever man had at first, so that the meaneſt lilly in Christs field, exceeds Adam in all his native Royalty. And as Satan sped in his first temptation, so he is still on the losing hand: what got he by all his paines upon Job, but to let that holy man know at last how dearly God loved him? When he foiled Peter so shamefully, do we not finde Christ owning Peter with as much love as ever? Peter must be the onely disciple, to whom by name the joyful newes of his resurrection is sent: *Go tell my disciples and Peter.* As if Christ had said, Be sure let his sad heart be comforted with this newes, that he may know I am friends with him for all his late cowardise.

But doth not this seem to countenance sin, and make Christians Queſt. beedleſſe, whether they fall into temptation or no? If God do thus ſhew his love to his Saints after their falls and foiles, why ſhould we be ſo ſhy of ſin, which ends ſo well at laſt?

Two things will prevent the danger of such an inference. *Anſw.*

First, we must distinguish between a soules being foiled through his own infirmitie, and his enemies subtilty and power over-matching him; and another, who through a false heart doth voluntarily prostrate himself to the lust of Satan; though a General will shew little pity to a souldier that should traiterously throw down his armes, and run to the enemy, yet if another in fighting receives a wound and be worsted, it will be no dishonour for him to expresse his pity and love, no, though he should send him out of the field in his own coach, lay him in his own bed, and appoint him his own Chirurgion. God doth not encourage wickedness in his Saints, but pities weaknesse. Even when the Saints, fall into a sin in its nature presumptuous, they do not commit it so presumptuously as others; there is a part true to God in their bosomes, though over-voted. *Moses* spake unadvisedly, but the devil had his instruments to provoke him, quite against the good mans temper. *David* numbers the people, but see how the devil dogg'd and hunted him, till at last he got the better, *1. Chron. 21. 1. Satan stood up and provoked David to number Israel.* How bravely did *Job* repel Satans darts? no wonder if in such a shower some one should get between the joynts of his armour. And for Peter we know (good man) with what a loyal heart,

heart, yea, zealous he went into the field, though when the enemy appeared his heart fail'd him.

2. Secondly, consider but the way how God communicates his love after his Saints falls, not in sinning, or for sinning, but in mourning & humbling their souls for their sins. Indeed did God smile on them, while acting sinfully, this might strengthen their sin, as wine in a fever would the disease; but when the fit is off, the venome of the disease spent, and breathed out in a kindly humiliation, now the creature lies low. Gods wine of comfort is a cordial to the drooping spirit, not fuel for sin. When David was led into temptation first, he must be clad in sack-cloth and mourning, and then God takes it off, and puts on the garment of joy and praise, 1 Chron. 21. 10, 15. Job, though he exprest so much courage and patience, yet (bewraying some infirmities after he was baited long by so many fresh dogs, men and devils) he must cry *peccavi*, and abhor himselfe in dust and ashes, before God will take him into his armes, Job 42.6. and the same way God takes with all his children. Now to his Saints in such a posture, God may with safety to his honour and their good, give a larger draught of his love then ordinary; their fears and sorrow which their sin hath cost them, will serve in stead of water to dash this strong wine of joy, and take away its headinesse, that it neither fume up into pride, nor occasion them to reele backward into Apostasie.

But why doth God now communicate his love?

Quest.
Ans.

First, from his own pitifull nature; *You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seene the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.* God loves not to rake in bleeding wounds, he knows a mourning soul is subject to be discouraged. A frown or an angry look from God, whom the Saint so dearly loves, must needs go near the heart, therefore God declares himselfe at hand to revive such, *Ilsa. 57. 15.* and he gives the reason, *verse 16.* *For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth, for the spirit should faile before me.* Whose spirit is there meant? not of the presumptuous sinner; he goes on, and never blinks; but of the contrite and humble ones. As the father observes the disposition of his children, one commits a fault and goes on rebelliously, despising his fathers anger, another (when offending him) layes it to heart, refuseth

to

to eat, gets into some corner to lament the displeasure of his father; the father sees it, and his bowels yerne towards him. Indeed should he not put his childe out of feare by discovering his love, the spirit of such a one would faile; 'tis not possible there should be a long breach between such a father and such a son, the one relenting over his sin, the other over his mourning son:

Secondly, God doth thus to poure the greater shame upon Satan, who is the great make-bate between God and the soule. How is the man ashamed that hath stirr'd up variance between husband and wife, father and son, to see the breach made up, and all set themselves against him? It went ill on Christs side, when Herod and Pilate were made friends, and can it go well with Satan to see all well between God and his children? If *Esther* be in favour, *Haman* her enemy shall have his face covered. Indeed, this covers Satans face with shame, to see a poor Saint even now his prisoner, whom he had leave to rob and plunder, tempt and disquiet, now sitting in the Sun-shine of Gods love, while he like a ravening Lion takes on for the losse of his prey.

Secondly, Satans aime is to weaken the Saints faith on God, and cool his love to God, but befool'd in both; for, first God turns their temptations, yea, their falls, to the further establishment of their faith, which (like the tree) stands stronger for its shaking, or like the Gyant *Anteus*, who in his wrestling with *Hercules* is feigned to get strength by every fall to the ground. False faith indeed once foiled, seldome comes on again; but true faith riseth and fights more valiantly, as we see in *Peter* and other Scripture examples. Temptation to faith is as fire to gold, 1 Pet. 1. 7. The fire doth not only discover which is true gold, but makes the true gold more pure; it comes out may be lesse in bulk and weight, (because severed from that soile and drosse which embased it) but more in value and worth. When Satan is bound up, and the Christian walks under the shines of divine favour, and encouragement of divine assistance; his faith may appear great, if compared with another under the withdrawings of God, and buffetings of Satan, but this is not equall judging; as it to try who is biggest of two men, we should measure one naked, and the other over his clothes; or in comparing two

piece of gold, weight one with the dross and dirt in contracts in the purse, with the other purged from these in the fire; faith before temptation hath much heterogeneous stuffe that cleaves to it, and goes for faith; but when temptation comes, these are discovered. Now the Christian feels corruption stir, which lay as dead before, now a cloud comes between the soul and the sweet face of God, (the sense of which latter, and the little sense of the other bore up his faith before) but these bladders prick't, he comes now to learne the true stroke in this heavenly Art of swimming on the promise, having nothing else to bear him up but that; and a little of this carries more of the precious nature of faith in it, then all the other; yea, is (like *Gideons* handful of men) stronger, when all these accessaries to faith are sent away, then when they were present; and here is all the devil gets: in stead of destroying his faith which he aims at, he is the occasion of the refining of it, and thereby adding to its strength.

2.

Secondly, the love of tempted Saints is enkindled to Christ by their temptations, and soiles in their temptations. Possibly in the fit there may seem a damp upon their love, as when water is first sprinkled upon the fire, but when the Conflict is a little over, and the Christian comes to himselfe, his love to Christ will break out like a vehement flame; First, the shame and sorrow which a gracious soule must needs feele in his bo'some for his sinfull miscarriage, while under the temptation, will provoke him to expresse his love to Christ above others, as is sweetly set forth in the Spouse, who when the cold fit of her distemper was off, and the temptation over, bestirs her to purpose, her lazy sicknesse is turned to love-sicknesse: she findes it as hard now to sit, as she did before to rise: she can rest in no place out of her Beloveds sight, but runs and asks every one she meets for him; and whence came all this vehemency of her zeal? all occasioned by her unclutiful carriage to her husband: she parted so unkindly with him, that bethinking what she had done) away she goes to make her peace. If sins committed in unregeneracy have such a force upon a gracious soule, that the thought of them, though pardoned, will still break and melt the heart into sorrow, (as we see in *Magdalen*) and prick on to shew zeal for God above others, (as in *Paul*) how much more will the
sins

sins of a Saint, who after sweet acquaintance with Jesus Christ, lifts up the heel against that bo'some, where he hath layen, affect, yea, dissolve the heart as into so many drops of water, and that sorrow provoke him to serve God at a higher rate than others? No childe so dutiful in all the family, as he who is return'd from his rebellion. Again secondly, as his own shame, so the experience which such a one hath of Christs love above others will encrease his love. Christs love is fuel to ours *Ex iisdem nutritur quibus constamus*; as it gives its being, so it affords growth: It is both Mother and Nurse to our love. The more Christ puts forth his love, the more heate our love gets, and next to Christs dying love, none greater than his succouring love in temptation. The Mother never hath such advantage to shew her affection to her childe, as when in distresse, sick, poor or imprisoned; so neither hath Christ to his children as when tempted, yea, worsted by temptation, when his children lie in Satans prison, bleeding under the wounds of their consciences, this is the season he takes to give an experiment of his tender heart in pitying, his faithfulness in praying for them, his mindfulness in sending succour to them, yea, his dear love in visiting them by his comforting Spirit. Now when the soul hath got off some great temptation, and reads the whole history thereof together, (wherein he findes what his own weaknesse was to resist Satan, nay, his unfaithfulness in complying with Satan, which might have provok't Christ to leave him to the fury of Satan) now to see both his folly pardoned, and his ruine graciously prevented, and that by no other hand, but Christs coming in to his rescue. (as *Abisbai* to *David*, when that Gyant thought to have slain him.) This must needs exceedingly endear Christ to the soul. At the reading of such records the Christian cannot but enquire, (as *Abasbuerus* concerning *Mordecai*, who by discovering a treason had saved the kings life,) what honour hath been done to his sweet Saviour for all this. And thus Jesus Christ, who in Satans thought to bring out of the souls favour and liking, comes in the end to sit higher and surer in the Saints affections than ever.

² Sam. 21.



CHAP. X.

*A brief Application of the Point in two
Branches.*

Use 1.

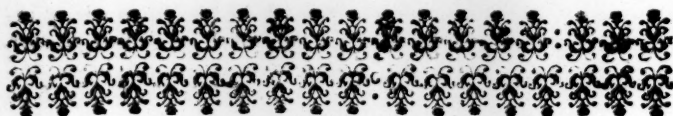
THis affords a reason why God suffers his dear children to fall into temptation, because he is able to out-shoot Satan in his own bow, and in the thing wherein he thinks to out-wit the Christian to be above him. God will not only be admired by his Saints in glory for his love in their salvation, but for his wisdom in the way to it. The love of God in saving them will be the sweet draught at the marriage-feast, and the rare wisdom of God in effecting this, as the curious workmanship with which the cup shall be enamell'd. Now wisdom appears most in untying knots, and wading through difficulties. The more crooked words there are in a business the more wisdom to fit a key to the lock, to make choice of such means as shall meet with the several turnings in the same. On purpose therefore doth God suffer such temptations to intervene, that his wisdom may be the more admired in opening all these, and leading his Saints that way to glory, by which Satan thought to have brought them to hell. The Israelites are bid *remember all the way that God led them in the wilderness for forty years*, Deut. 8. 2. The History of these wars (Christian) will be pleasant to read in heaven, though bloody to fight on earth. Moses and Elias talk't with Christ on *Taber*, (an Emblem of the sweet communion which shall passe between Christ and his Saints in glory,) and what was their task, Luke 9. 30. but of his death and sufferings? It seems a discourse of our sufferings and temptations, are not too low a subject for that blissful state. Indeed this left out, would make a blemish in the faire face of Heavens glory. Could the damned forget the way they went into hell, how oft the Spirit of God was wooing, and how far they were over-
come

come by the conviction of it ; in a word how many turns and returns there were in their journey forward and backward , what possibilities , yea , probabilities they had for heaven , when on earth ; were but some hand so kind as to blot the tormenting passages out of their memories , it would ease them wonderfully . So were it possible glorified Saints could forget the way , wherein they went to glory ; and the several dangers that interven'd from Satan , and their own back-sliding hearts , they and their God too would be losers by it , I mean in regard of his manifestative glory . What is the glory wherein God appears at *Zion* deliverance ? Those royal garments of salvation , that make him so admired of men and Angels ? But the celebration of all his Attributes , according to what every one hath done towards their salvation . Now wisdom being that which the creature chiefly glories in , (and chosen by Satan for his first bait , who made *Eve* believe she should be like God in knowledge and wisdom) therefore God , to give Satan the more shameful fall , gives him leave to use his wits and wiles in tempting and troubling his children , in which lies his great advantage over the Saints , that so the way to his own Throne (where his wisdom shall at last , as well as his mercy sit in all its Royalty) may be paved with the skulls (as I may so speak) of devils .

Secondly , this gives a strong cordial to our fainting faith , in the behalf of the Church of Christ . If all the devils wits and wiles will not serve him to overcome one single soldier in Christs Camp , much lesse shall he ever ruine the whole Army . These are dayes of great confusions in the Christian world , and the chief fear of a gracious heart is for the *Ark* , lest that should fall into the enemies hand , (and when this *Palladium* is taken , the City of God (his Church ,) be trod under the feet of pri'e ,) I confess Satan seems to get ground daily ; he hath strangely wriggled into the bosoms and principles of many , who by the fame of their Profession and zeal , had obtained in the opinion of others , to be reckoned among the chief of Christs Worthies in their generation . He hath sadly corrupted the truths of Christ , brought a disesteem on Ordinances , (that by this , and as a judgment for this , the wombe of the Gospel is become in a great measure barren , and her children which hang upon her breasts ,

thrive not in love and holiness as of old, when the milk was not so much, nor that so spiritfull) he hath had advantage by the divisions of the gospel, to harden those that are wicked into a further disdain of Religion, and by the bloody wars of late years, to boile up the wrath of the Popish and profane crew to a higher pitch of rage and fury against Christs little remnant than ever : so that if ever God should suffer the sword to fall into their hand, they are disciplin'd and fitted to play the bloody butchers on Christs sheep above their fore-fathers, (neither are they so crest-fallen, but that they can hope for such a day, yea, take up some of those joyes upon trust afore-hand to solace them selves, while the rest follow) And now (Christian) may be their confidence, together with the distracted state of Christs affairs in the world, may discompose thy Spirit, concerning the issue of these rolling providences that are over our heads, but be still, poor heart, and know that the contest is not between the Church and Satan, but between Christ and him. These are the two champions. Stand now, O ye Army of Saints, still by faith, to see the All wise God wrestle with a subtil devil. If you live not to see the period of these great confusions, yet generations after you shall behold the Almighty smite off this Goliath's head with his own sword, and take this cunning hunter in the toile of his own policies, that faith which ascribes greatness and wisdom to God, will shrink up Satans subtilty into a *nigrum nihil*, a thing of nothing. *Increduli timent diabolum, quasi leonem, qui fide fortes despiciunt quasi vermiculum.* Bern. Unbelief fears Satan as a Lion, faith treads on him as a worme. Behold therefore thy God at work, and promise thy self that what he is about, will be an excellent piece. None can drive him from his work. The Pilot is beaten from the helme, and can doe little in a storm, but lets the ship go a drift. The Architect cannot work, when night drawes the curtaine, yea, is driven off the Scaffold with a storme of raine, such Workmen are the wisest Counsellours and mightiest Princes on earth. A pinch may come, when it is as vain to say, Help O King, as, Help O Beggar; mans wisdom may be levell'd with folly, but God is never interrupted. All the plots of hell and commotions on earth, have not so much as shak't Gods hand, to spoil one letter or line that he hath been drawing. The mysteriousness of his providence may hang a curtain before his work,

work, that we cannot see what he is doing, but then *when darkness is about him, righteousness is the seat of his Throne for ever.* O, where's our faith (Sirs!) let God be wise, and all men and devils fools. What though thou seest a *Babel* more likely to go up, then a *Babylon* to be pull'd down, yet believe God is making his secret approaches, and will clap his ladders on a sudden to the walls thereof: Suppose truth were Prisoner with *Joseph*, and errour the Courtier, to have its head lift up by the favour of the times, yet dost not remember that the way to truths preferment lies through the prison? yea, what though the Church were like *Jonah* in the Whales belly, swallowed up to the eye of reason by the fury of men, yet dost not remember the Whale had not power to digest the Prophet? O be not too quick to bury the Church before she be dead. Stay while Christ tries his skill before you give it over: bring Christ by your prayers to its grave, to speak a Resurrection-word. Admirable hath the Saints faith been in such straits: as *Josephs*, who pawn'd his bones that God would visit his brethren, willing them to lay him where he believed they should be brought; *Jeremiah* purchaseth a field of his Uncle, and payes down the money for it, and this when the *Caldean* army quartered about *Jerusalem*, ready to take the City, and carry him with the rest into *Babylon*: And all this by Gods appointment, *Jer. 22. 6, 7, 8.* that he might shew the Jewes by this, how undoubtedly he (in that sad juncture of time) did believe the performance of the Promise for their return out of captivity. Indeed God counts himself exceedingly disparaged in the thoughts of his people, (though at the lowest ebbe of his Churches affairs) if his naked word, and the single bond of his Promise will not be taken as sufficient security to their faith for its deliverance.



VERSE 12.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities and Powers, against the Rulers of the darknesse of this world, against spiritual wickednesse in high places.

THe words are coupled to the Precedent with that causal particle *For*, which either refers to the two foregoing verses, and then they are a further reason, pressing the necessity of Christian fortitude in the tenth verse, and furniture in the eleventh: or else to the last words of the eleventh verse, where the Apostle having descried the Saints grand enemy to be Satan, and described him in one of his attributes, his wily subtilty, he in this further displays him in his proper colours, not to weaken the Saints hands, but waken their care, that seeing their enemy marching up in a full body, they might stand in better order to receive his charge. Where by the way we may observe the Apostles simplicity and plain dealing; he doth not undervalue the strength of the enemy, and represent him inconsiderable, as Captaines use to keep their souldiers together, by slighting the power of their adversary; no, he tells them the worst at first. If Satan had been to set out his own power, he could have challeng'd no more then is here granted him. See here the difference between Christ dealing with his followers, and Satan with his. Satan dares not let sinners know who that God is they fight against; this were enough to breed a mutiny in the devils camp. Silly soules they are drawn into the field by a false report of God and his ways, and are kept there together with lies and faire tales, but Christ is not afraid to shew his Saints their enemy in all his Power and Principality, the Weaknesse of God being stronger then the powers of hell.

CHAP.



CHAP. I.

Sheweth, the Christians life here to

be a continual wrestling with sin and Satan, and the paucity of those who are true Wrestlers, as also how the true Wrestlers should manage their combat.

THe words contain a lively description of a bloody and lasting war between the Christian and his implacable enemy; in which we may observe: First, the Christians state in this life, set out by this word *wrestling*.

Secondly the assailants that appear in arms against the Christian, who are described; First, Negatively, *Not flesh and blood*: Or rather comparatively, not chiefly flesh and blood. Secondly, Positively, *but against Principalities, Powers, &c.*

SECT. I.

First, for the first, the wrestling or conflicting state of a Christian in this life, is rendered observable here by a threefold circumstance

First, the kinde of combat which the Christians state is here set out by, *ἐν ἡμῖν ἀνταγωνισμὸν*, which though it be used sometimes for a wrestling of sport and recreation, yet here to set out the sharpness of the Christians encounter; there are two things in wrestling that render it a sharper combat then others. First, wrestling is not properly fighting against a multitude, but when one enemy singles out another, and enters the list with him, each exerting their whole force and strength against one another, as *David and Goliath*, when the whole Armies stood as

1.

it were in a ring to behold the bloody issue of that duel. Now this is more fierce then to fight in an army, where though the battel be sharp and long, the sou'dier is not alwayes engaged, but falls off when he had discharged, and takes breath a while: yea possibly may escape without hurt or stroak, because there the enemies aime is not at this or that man, but at the whole heap, but in wrestling one cannot scape so, he being the particular object of the enemies fury, must needs be shaken and tried to purpose. Indeed the word *παλιν* signifies such a strife, as shakes the body shake again, *quia corpus παλινεται*. Satan hath not only a general malice against the army of Saints, but a spite against thee *John*, thee *Joane*: he'll single thee out for his enemy. We finde *Jacob*, when alone, a man wrestled with him. As God delights to have private communion with his single, Saints, so the devil to try it hand to hand with the Christian when he gets him alone. As we lose much comfort, when we do not apply the Promise and Providence to God to our particular persons and conditions, God loves me, pardons me, takes care of me: the water at the town-conduit doth me no good, if I want a pipe to empty it into my cistene; so it obstructs our care and watchfulnesse, when we conceive of Satans wrath and fury, as bent in general against the Saints, and not against me in particular. O how carefull would a soul be in duty, if as going to Church or Closet he had such a serious meditation as this: Now Satan is at my heels to hinder me in my work, if my God help me not!

2. Secondly, Tis a close combate. Armies fight at some distance. Wrestlers grapple hand to hand. An arrow shot from afar may be seen and shunn'd, but when the enemy hath hold of one there is no declining, but either he must resist manfully, or fall shamefully at his enemies foot. Satan comes close up, and gets within the Christian, takes his hold of his very flesh & corrupt nature, and by this shakes him.

3. Thirdly, the universality of the combate. We wrestle *ἡμῖν πάλιν*, which comprehends all, on purpose you may perceive the Apostle changeth the pronoun *ὑμῶς* in the former verse, into *ἡμῖν* in this, that he may include himself as well as them; as if he had said, the quarrel is with every Saint. Satan neither feares to assault the Minister, nor despiseth to wrestle with the meanest Saint

Saint in the Congregation; great and small, Minister and people, all must wrestle: Not one part of Christs Army in the field, and the other at ease in their quarters, where no enemy comes, here are enemies enough to engage all at once.

Thirdly, the permanency or duration of this combate, and that lies in the tense *ἔτι ἡμῖν πάλη* Not, our wrestling was at first Conversion, but now over, and we past the pikes; not, we shall wrestle when sicknesse comes, and death comes, but our wrestling is; the enemy is ever in sight of us, yea, in sight with us, there is an evil of every dayes temptation, which (like Pauls bonds,) abides us where ever we become. So that these particulars summ'd p will amount to his point: 3.

SECT. II.

The Christians life is a continual wrestling. He is as *Jeremy* said of him'self, borne *a man of strife*, or what the Prophet to *Asa*, may be said to every Christian; *From hence thou shalt have wars*, from thy spiritual birth to thy natural death, from the houre when thou first diddest set thy face to heaven, till thou shalt set thy foot in heaven. *Israels* march out of *Egypt* was in Gospel-sense our taking the field against sin and Satan, and when had they peace? not till they lodged their colours in *Canaan*. No condition wherein the Christian is here below is quiet. Is it prosperity or adversity, here is work for both hands, to keep pride and security down in the one, faith and patience up in the other: no place which the Christian can call priviledg'd ground. Lot in *Sodom* wrestled with the wicked inhabitants thereof, his righteous soule being vexed with their unclean conversation. And how fares he at *Zoar*? do not his own daughters bring a spark of *Sodoms* fire into his own bed, whereby he is inflamed with lust? Some have thought if they were but in such a family, under such a Ministry out of such occasions: O then they should never be tempted as now they are; I confesse change of aire is a great help to weak nature, and these forenamed as vantage-ground against Satan; but think'ft thou to flie from Satins presence thus? No, though thou should'ft take the wings of the morning he would flie after thee, these may make him change

Doct.

change his method in tempting, but not lay down his deigne; so long as his old friend is a live wi' him, he will be knocking at thy door without. No duty can be performed without wrestling; The Christian needs his sword as much as his trowel. He wrestles with a body of flesh; this to the Christian in duty is as the beast to the traveller, he cannot go his journey without it, & much ado to go with it. If the flesh be kept high and lusty, then 'tis wanton and will not obey; if low, then it's weak and soon tires: Thus the Christian rids but little ground, because he must go his weak bodiespace. He wrestles with a body of sin as well as of flesh, this mutters and murmures when the soul is taking up any duty. Sometimes it keeps the Christian from duty, so that he cannot doe what he would. As Paul said, *I would have come once and again, but Satan hindred me.* I would have prayed may the Christian say at such a time, and meditated on the Word I heard, the mercies I received at another, but this enemy hindred. 'Tis true indeed, grace swayes the scepter in such a soul, yet as school-boies taking their time when their Master is abroad do shut him out, and for a while lord it in misrule, though they are whip't for it afterwards. Thus the unregenerate part takes advantage when grace is not on its watch to disturb its government, and shut it out from duty, though this at last makes the soule more severe in mortifying, yet it costs some scuffle before it can recover its throne, and when it cannot shut from duty, yet then is the Christian wofully yok't with it in duty; it cannot do what it doth as it would; many a letter in its copy doth this enemy spoil, while he jogs him with impertinent thoughts; when the Christian is a praying, then Satan and the flesh are a prating; he cries, and they louder, to put him out or drown his cry. Thus we see the Christian is assail'd on every side by his enemy: and how can it be other, when the seeds of war are laid deep in the natures of both, which can never be rooted up till the devil cease to be a devil, sin to be sin, and the Saint to be a Saint? Though wolves may snarle at one another, yet soon are quiet again, because the quarrel is not in their nature; but the Wolfe and the Lamb can never be made friends. Sin will lust against grace, and grace draw upon sin when ever they meet.

SECT. III.

First, this may reprove such as wrestle, but against whom? *against God, not against sin and Satan.* These are bold men indeed, who dare try a fall with the Almighty; yet such there are, and a Wo pronounced against them. *Isa. 45. 9. Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker.* 'Tis easie to tell which of these will be worked. What can he do, but break his shins that dasheth them against a rock? A goodly battel there is like to be, when thorns contest with fire, and stubble with flame. But where live those Gyants, that dare enter the list with the great God? What are their names that we may know them, and brand them for creatures above all other unworthy to live? Take heed O thou who askest, that the wretched man whom thou seemest so to despise, be not found in thy own clothes it self. *Judas* was the traitor, though he would not answer to his name, but put it off with a *Master is it I?* And so mayest thou be the fighter against God. The heart is deceitful. Even holy *David*, for all his anger was so hot against the rich man, that took away the poor mans ewe-Lamb, that he bound it with an oath, the man should not live who had done it, yet proves at last to be himself the man, as the Prophet told him, *2 Sam. 12.*

Now there are two ways wherein men wrestle against God; First, when they wrestle against his Spirit. Secondly, when they wrestle against his providence.

First, when they wrestle against his Spirit. We read of the Spirit striving with the creature, *Gen. 6. 3. My spirit shall not always strive with man.* Where the striving is not in anger and wrath to destroy them, (that God could do without any stir or scuffle) but a loving strife and contest with man. The old world was running with such a carriere headlong into their ruine, he sends his Spirits to interpose, and by his counsels and repoofes to offer, as it were, to stop them and reclaim them. As if one seeing another ready to offer violence on him self, should strive to get the knife out of his hand, with which he would do the mischief. Or one that hath a purse of gold in his hand to give, should follow another by all manner of entreaties, striving with him to

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accept

accept & take it. Such a kinde of strife is this of the Spirits with men. They are the lusts of men, (those bloudy instruments of death, with which sinners are mi chieving themselves) that the holy Spirit strives by his sweet counsels and entreaties to get out of our hands. They are Christs, his grace and eternal life he strives to make us accept at the hands of Gods mercy; and for repulsing the Spirit thus striving with them, sinners are justly counted fighters against God: *Ye stiffe-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and eares, ye do alwayes resist the Holy Ghost.* Now there is a twofol l striving of the Spirit, and so of our wrestling against it. First, the Spirit strives in his messengers with sinners. They comming on his errand, and not their own, he voucheth the faithful counsels, reproofes and exhortations which they give as his own act. *Noah*, that *Preacher of righteousness*, what he said to the old world, is call'd the *Preaching of the Spirit*, *1 Pet. 3. 19.* The pains that *Moses*, *Aaron* and other servants of God took in instructing *Israel*, is call'd the instruction of the Spirit, *Nehem. 9. 20.* so that when the Word, which Gods Ministers bring in his name, is rejected, the faithful counsels they give are thrown at sinners heels and made light of; then doe they strive with the Spirit, and wrestle against Christ as really, as if he visibly in his own person had been in the Pulpit, and preached the same Sermon to them. When God comes to reckon with sinners, it will prove so; then God will rub up your memories, and minde you of his striving with you, and your unkinde resisting him. *They, whether they will heare, or whether they wil forbear, shall know they had a Prophet among them.* Now men soon forget whom and what they hear; ask them what was prest upon their conscience in such a Sermon, they have forgot; what were the precious truths la'id out in another, and they are lost: and well were it for them if their memories were no better in another world: it would ease their torments more than a little. But then they shall know they had a Prophet among them, and what a price they had with him in their hands, though it was in fooles keeping. They shall know what he was, and what he said, though a thousand years past, as fresh as if it were done but last night. The more zealous and compassionate, the more painful and pow erful he was in his place, the graeter shall their sin be found, to break from such holy violence offered to doe them

them good. Surely God will have something for the sweat, yea, lives of his servants which were worne out in striving with such rebellious ones. Maybe yet, sinners, your firmament is clear, no cloud to be seen that portends a storme; but know (as you use to say) winter does not rot in the clouds, you shall have it at last. Every threatening which your faithful Ministers have denounced against you out of the Word, God is bound to make good. *He confirmeth the Word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers*, and that in judgment against sinners, confirming the threatenings, as well as in mercy performing the promises, which they declare as the portion of his children. But it will be time enough to ask such on a sick-bed, or a dying houre, whether the words of the Lord delivered by their faithful Preachers have not taken hold of them. Some have confessed with horror they have, as the Jewes, *Zech. 1.6. Like as the Lord of hosts thought to doe unto us, so hath he dealt with us.* Secondly, the Spirit strives with men more immediately, when he makes his inward approaches to the consciences of men, debating in their own bosoms the case with them; one while he shews them their sins in their bloody colours, and whether they will surely bring them, if not look't to timely, which he doth so convincingly, that the creature smells sometimes the very fire and brimstone about him, and is at present in a temporary hell; another while he falls a parlying and treating with them, making gracious overtures to the sinner, if he will return at his repoose, presents the grace of the Gospel, and opens a door of hope for his recovery, yea, falls a wooing and beseeching of him to throw down his rebellious armes, and come to Christ for life: whose heart is in a present disposition to receive and embrace the first motion the returning sinner makes for mercy. Now when the Spirit of God follows the sinner from place to place, and time to time, suggesting such motions, and renewing his old suit, and the creature shall sing out of the Spirits hands thus striving with him *re infectâ*, as far from renouncing his lusts, or taking any liking to Christ as ever: This is to resist the Spirit to his face, and it carries so much malignity in it, that (even where it hath not been final) poor humbled souls have been over-set with the horror of it, that they could not for a long time be perswaded, but that it was the unpardonable sin. Take heed there-

Esa. 44.26

fore sinners, how you use the Spirit when he comes, knocking at the door of your hearts : Open at his knock, and he will be your guest, you shall have his sweet company ; repulse him, and you have not a Promise he'll knock again. And if once he leave striving with thee, unhappy man, thou art lost for ever ; thou liest like a ship cast up by the waves upon some high rock, where the tide never come to fetch it off. Thou mayest come to the Word, converse with other Ordinances, but in vain. 'Tis the spirit in them, which is both tide and winde, to set the soul afloat, and carry it on, or else it lies like a ship on dry ground which stirs not.

Secondly, we wrestle against God when we wrestle with his Providence, and that two ways: First when we are discontented with his providential dispose of us. Gods carving for us doth not please us so, but that we are objecting against his dealings towards us, at least muttering something with the fool in our hearts, which God hears as lightly as man our words. God counts then we begin to quarrel with him, when we do not acquiesce in, and say Amen to his Providence whatever it is. He calls it *a contending with the Almighty*, Job 40.1. yea, *a reproving of God*. And he is a bold man sure that dare finde fault with God, and article against heaven. God challengeth him, whoever he is that doth this, to answer it at his peril. *He that reproveth God, let him answer it*, v.2. of the chapter forementioned. It was high time for Job to have done, when he heares what a sense God puts upon those unwary words, which drop't from him in the anguish of his Spirit, and paroxysme of his sufferings; contend with the Almighty? reprove God? Good man, how blank he is, and cries out, *I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth*. Let God but pardon what is past, and he shall hear such language no more. O Sirs, take heed of this wrestling above all other. Contention is uncomfortable, with whomsoever it is we fall out. Neighbours of friends, wife or husband, children or servants : but worst of all with God. If God cannot please thee, but thy heart riseth against him, what hopes are there of thy pleasing him, who will take nothing kindly from that man who is angry with him? And how can love to God be preserved in a discontented heart, that is always muttering against him? Love cannot think any evil of

God,

God, nor endure to hear any speak evil of him, but it must take Gods part, as *Jonathan Davids*, when *Saul* spake basely of him, and when it cannot be heard, will like him arise and be gone. When afflicted, love can allow thee to groan, but not to grumble. If thou wilt ease thy incumbred spirit into Gods bosome by prayer, and humbly wrestle with God on thy knees, love is for thee, and will help thee to the best arguments thou canst use to God; But if thou wilt vent thy distempered passions, and shew a mutinous spirit against God, this stabs it to the heart.

Secondly, we wrestle against Providence, when uncorrigible under the various dispensations of God toward us. Providence has a voice, if we had an eare; mercies should draw, afflictions drive; now when neither faire meanes nor fowle do us good, but we are impenitent under both; this is to wrestle against God with both hands. Either of these have their peculiar aggravations. One is against love, and so disingenuous; the other is against the smart of his rod, and therein we slight his anger, and are cruel to our selves in kicking against the pricks. Mercy should make us ashamed, wrath afraid to sin. He that is not ashamed, has not the spirit of a man. He that is not afraid when smitten, is worse then the beast who stands in aw of whip & spur. Sometimes mercy (especially these outward mercies, which have a pleasing relish to the carnal part in a Christian) hath prov'd a snare to the best of men, but then affliction useth to recover them; but when affliction makes men worse, and they harden themselves against God, to sin more & more while the rod is on them, what is like to reclaim them? few are made better by prosperity whom afflictions make worse. He that will sin, though he goes in pain, will much more if that once be gone. But take heed of this contesting with God. There is nothing got by scuffling with God, but blows, or worse. If he say he will afflict thee no more, 'tis even the worst he can say; 'tis as much as if he should say he'd be in thy debt till another world, and there pay thee altogether. But if he meanes thee mercy, thou shalt hear from him in some sharper affliction then ever. He hath wedges that can rive thee, wert thou a more knotty piece then thou art.

Are there yet the treasures of wickedesse, and the scant measure that is abominable? (* saith God to Israel) what uncorrigible though the Lords voice crieth unto the City, bidding you hear the

•Mic. 6. 9.

rod, and him that hath appointed it? See what course God resolves on, v. 13. *Therefore will I make thee sick in smiting of thee.* As if he had said, my other Physick I see was too weak, it did not work or turne your stomack, but I will prepare a portion that shall make you sick at heart.

2. Secondly, It reproves those who seem to wrestle against sin, but not according to the Word of Command that Christ gives. There is a Law in wrestling which must be observ'd, 2 Tim.

2. 5. *If a man also strive for Masters, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.* He alludes to the Romane games, to which there were Judges appointed to see that no foule play were offered contrary to the Law for wrestling; the prize being denied to such, though they did soile their adversary, which the Apostle improves to make the Christian carefull in his war, as being under a stricter Law and Discipline, that requires not only valour to fight, but obedience to fight, by order and according to the Word of Command: Now few do this that go for great Wrestlers.

1. First, some while they wrestle against one sin, embrace another; and in this case 'tis not the person wrestles against sin, but one sin wrestles with another, and 'tis no wonder to see thieves fall out when they come to divide the spoil; Lusts are *divers*, Tit. 3. 3. and 'tis hard to please many Masters, especially when their commands are so contrary; when pride bids lay on in bravery, lavish out in entertainment; covetousnesse bids lay up, when malice bids revenge; carnal policy saith, conceal thy wrath, though not forgive. When lust sends to his whores, hypocrisie pulls him back for shame of the world. Now is he Gods Champion that resists one sin at the command of another it may be a worse.

2. Secondly, some wrestle, but they are prest into the field, not Voluntiers, their slavish feares scares them at present from their lust; so that the Combate is rather betwixt their Conscience and Will, then them and your lust, Give me such a sin saith Will; No, saith conscience, it will scall'd, and throwes it away. A man may love the wine though he is loth to have his lips burnt. *Hypocrites themselves are afraid to burne.* In such Combates the Will at last prevails, either by bribing the understanding to present the lust it desires in a more pleasing dresse, (that conscience may

may not be scared with such hideous apparitions of wrath) or by pacifying conscience with some promise of repentance for the auture, or by forbearing some sin for the present, which it can best spare, thereby to gain the reputation of something like a reformation; Or if all this will not do, then (prompted by the fury of its lust) the Will proclaimes open war against conscience, sinning in the face of it, like some wilde horse, (impatient of the spur which pricks him, and a bridle that curbs him) gets the bit between his teeth, and runs with full speed, till at last he easeth himself off his Rider; and then where he sees fattest pasture, no hedge or ditch can withhold him, till in the end you finde him, starving in some pound for his trespassse: Thus many sin at such rate, that conscience can no longer hold the reins, nor sit the saddle, but is thrown down and laid for dead; and then the wretches range where their lusts can have the fullest meal, till at last they pay for their stolen pleasures most dearly, when conscience comes to it self, pursues them, and takes them more surely by the throat than ever, never to let them go till it brings them before Gods Tribunal.

3.

Thirdly, others wrestle with sin, but they do not hate it, and therefore they are favourable to it, and seeke not the life of sin as their deadly enemy; these wrestle in jest, and not in earnest; the wounds they give sin one day, are healed by the next. Let men resolve never so strongly against sin, yet will it creep again into their favour, till the love of sin be quenched in the heart, and this fire will never dye of it self, the love of Christ must quench the love of sin, as *Jerome* excellently, *Unus amor exinguit alium*. This heavenly fire will indeed put out the flame of hell, which he illustrates by *Abasbuernus* his carriage to *Vashti* his Queen, who in the first chapter makes a decree in all haste, that she comes no more before him: but when his passion is a little down, chap. 2 v. 1. he begins to relent towards her, which his counsel perceiving, presently seek out for a beautiful Virgin, on whom the King might place his love, and take into his royal bed, which done, we hear no more of *Vashti*, then and not till then will the soules decree stand against sin, when the soul hath taken Christ into his bosome.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Secondly, to the Saints, seeing your life is a continual wrestling here on earth, 'tis your wisdom to study how you may best manage the combat with your worst enemy, which that you may do, take these few directions.

First, look thou goest not into the field without thy Second; my meaning is, engage God by prayer to stand at thy back? God is in a league offensive and defensive with thee, but he looks to be called. Did the *Ephraimites* take it ill, that *Gideon* called them not into the field, and may not God much more? as if thou meantst to steal a victory before he should know it. Thou hast more valour than *Moses*, who would not stir without God, no, though he sent an Angel for his Lieutenant. Thou art wiser than *Jacob*, who to overcome *Esau*, now marching up, turns from him, and falls upon God; he knew if he could wrestle with God, he might trust God to deal with his brother. Engage God and the back-door is shut, no enemy can come behinde thee, yea, thine enemy shall fall before thee. God turne the counsel of *Achitophel* into foolishnesse, saith *David*, Heaven saith Amen to his prayer, and the wretch hangs himself.

Secondly, be very careful of giving thine enemy hand-hold. Wrestlers strive to fasten upon some part or other, which gives them advantage more easily to throw their adversary; to prevent which, they use, First, to lay aside their garments. Secondly, to anoint their bodies. For the first, Christian labour to put off the old man which is most personal, that corruption, which *David* calls his own iniquity, *Psal.* 18. 23. This is the skirt which Satan layes hold of, observe what it is, and mortifie it daily, then Satan will retreat with shame, when he sees the head of that enemy upon the wall, which should have betrayed thee into his hands. Secondly, the *Romane* Wrestlers used to anoint their bodies; so do thou, bathe thy soul with the frequent meditation of Christs love. Satan will finde little welcome, where Christs love dwells, love will kindle love, and that will be as a wall of fire to keep off Satan, it will make thee disdain the offer of a sin, and as oile supple the joints, and make agile

agile to offend thy enemy. Think how Christ wrestled in thy quarrel, sin, hell and wrath had all come full mouth upon thee, had not he coped with them in the way. And canst thou finde in thy heart to requite his love, by terraying his glory into the hands of sin, by cowardise or treachery: say not thou lovest him, so long as thou canst lay those sins in thy bosome, which pluck't his heart out of his bosome. It were strange if a childe should keep, and delight to use no other knife, but that wherewith his father was stabb'd.

Thirdly, improve the advantage thou gettest at any time wisely. Sometimes the Christian hath his enemy on the hip, yea, on the ground, can set his foot on the very neck of his pride, and throw away his unbelieve, as a thing absurd and unreasonable; now (as a wise wrestler) fall with all thy weight upon thine enemy; though man think it foul play to strike when his adversary is down, yet doe not thou so complement with sin, as to let it breathe or rise. Take heed thou beest not charged of God, as once *Abah*, for letting goe this enemy now in thy hands, whom God hath appointed to destruction, Learn a little wisdom of the Serpents brood, who when they had Christ under their foot, never thought they had him sure enough; no, not when dead, and therefore both seal and watch his grave. Thus doe thou to hinder the resurrection of thy sin, seal it down with stronger purposes, solemn covenants, and watch it by a wakeful circumspect walking.

This is ground of consolation to the weak Christian, who disputes against the truth of his grace, from the inward conflicts and fightings he hath with his lusts, and is ready to say (like *Gideon*, in regard of outward enemies,) *If God be with me, why is all this befallen me?* Why do I finde such struglings in me, provoking me to sin, pulling me back from that which is good? Why dost ask? The Answer is soon given, because thou art a Wrestler, not a Conquerour. Thou mistakest the state of a Christian in this life: When one is made a Christian, he is not presently call'd to triumph over his slain enemies, but carried into the field to meet and fight them. The state of grace is the commencing of a war against sin, not the ending of it; rather then thou shalt not have an enemy to wrestle with, God himself will come in a disguise into the field, and appear to be thine enemy,

enemy. Thus when *Jacob* was alone, a man wrestled with him until breaking of the day, and therefore set thy heart at rest if this be thy scruple: Thy soul may rather take comfort in this, that thou art a wrestler; This struggling within thee, if upon the right ground, and to the right end, doth evidence there are two Nations within thee, two contrary natures, the one from earth earthly, and the other from heaven heavenly; yea, for thy further comfort know, though thy corrupt nature be the elder, yet it shall serve the younger.

Use 4.

O how should this make thee (Christian) long to be gone home, where there is none of this stir and scuffle! 'Tis strange, that every hour seems not a day, and every day a year, till death sounds thy joyful retreat, and calls thee off the field, where the bullets fly so thick, and thou art fighting for thy life with thy deadly enemies, to come to Court, where not swords, but palmes are seen in the Saints hands; not drums, but harps; not groanes of bleeding souldiers and wounded consciences, but sweet and ravishing musick is heard of triumphing Victors caroling the praises of God and the Lambe, through whom they have overcome. Well, Christians, while you are below, comfort your selves with these things; There is a place of Rest remains for the people of God: You do not beat the aire, but wrestle for a Heaven that is yonder above these clouds; you have your worst first, the best will follow. You wrestle but to win a crown, and win to wear it, yea wear never to lose it, which once on none shall ever take off, or put you to the hazzard of battle more. Here we overcome to fight ag- in, the battel of one temptation may be over, but the war remaines. What peace can we have, as long as devils can come abroad out of their holes, or any thing of sinful nature remains in our selves unmortified? Which will even fight upon its knees, and strike with one arme while the other is cut off; but when death comes, the last stroak is struck: this good Physitian will perfectly cure thee of thy spiritual blindnesse and lameness, (as the Martyr told his fellow at the stake bloody *Bonner* would do their bodily) What is it, Christian, which takes away the joy of thy life, but the wrestlings and combates which this besomene y puts thee to? Is not this the *Peninnab*, that vexing and disturbing thy spirit, hath kept thee off many a sweet meale, thou mightest have had in communion with God and his Saints?

or

or if thou hast come, hath made the cover the Altar of God with thy teares and groans? and will it not be a happy hand that cuts the knot, and sets thee loose from thy deadness, hypocrisie, pride, and what not, wherewith thou wert yoked? 'Tis life which is thy losse, and death which is thy gaine. Be but willing to endure the rending of this vail of thy flesh, and thou art where thou wouldest be, out of the reach of sin, at rest in the bosome of thy God. And why should a short evil of paine affright the more, then the deliverance from a continual torment of sins evil ravish thee? Some you know have chose to be cut, rather then to be ground daily with the stone, and yet, may be, their pain comes again, and canst thou not quietly think of dying, to be delivered from the torment of these sins, never to return more? And yet that is not the half that death doth for thee: Peace is sweet after war, ease after pain; but what tongue can expresse what joy, what glory must fill the creature at the first sight of God, and that blessed company? none but one that dwells there can tell. Did we know more of that blissetful state, we Ministers should finde it as hard a work to perswade Christians to be willing to live here so long, as now it is to perswade them to be willing to die so soon.



CHAP. II.

*Wherein is shewed what is meant by
flesh and blood, how the Christian doth not, and how
he doth wrestle against the same.*

SECT. I.

NOW follows the description of the Saints enemies, with whom he is to wrestle.

First, described Negatively, Not with flesh and blood.

Secondly, Positively, But against Principalities and Powers, &c.

First, for the Negative part of the Description; we are not to take it for a pure negation, as if we had no conflict with flesh and blood, but wholly and solely to engage against Satan; but by way of comparison, not only with flesh and blood, and in some sense not chiefly. It is usual in Scripture such manner of phrase, *Luke 14. 12. Call not thy freinds to dinner, but the poore;* that is, not only those, so as to neglect the poor. Now what is meant here by flesh and blood? there is a double interpretation of the words.

1. First, by flesh and blood may be meant our own bosome-corruptions; that sin which is in our corrupt nature so oft called flesh in the Scripture; *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, and sometimes flesh and blood, as *Matth. 16. 17. Flesh and blood hath not revealed this*, that is, this Confession thou hast made comes from above; thy fleshly corrupt minde could never have found out this supernatural truth, thy sinful Will would never have embraced it. So, *1 Cor. 15. 20. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdome of God*, that is, sinfull mortal flesh, as it's expounded in the words following. So, *Gal. 1. 21. I consulted not with flesh and blood*, that is, carnal reason. Now this bosome-enemy may be called flesh, partly from its derivation, and partly from its operation; from its derivation, because it's derived and propagated to us by natural generation; thus *Adam* is said to beget a son in his own likenesse, sinfull as he was, as well as mortal and miserable; yea, the holiest Saint on earth having flesh in him, derives this corrupt and sinfull nature to his childe, as the circumcised Jew begat an uncircumcised childe; and the wheat cleans'd and fan'd (being sown comes up with a husk, *John 3. 6. That which is borne of the flesh is flesh*).

2. Secondly, its call'd flesh from the operations of this corrupt nature, which are fleshly and carnall; The reasonings of the corrupt minde fleshly, therefore called the carnal minde, incapable indeed of the things of God, which it neither doth nor can perceive: As the Sunne doth *obscure superiora dum revelat inferiora*; hide the Heavens which are above it from us, while it reveales things beneath; so carnal reason leaves the creature in the dark concerning spiritual truths, when it is most able to conceive and discourse of creature-excellencies, and carnal interests here below. What a childish question, for so wise a

man did *Nicodemus* put to Christ? Though Christ to help him did wrap his speech in a carnal phrase. If fleshly reason cannot understand spiritual truths when thus accommodated, and the notions of the Gospel translated into its own language, what skill is it like to have of them, if put to read them in their original tongue? I mean, if this garment of carnal expression were taken off, and spiritual truths in their naked hue presented to its view. The motions of the natural will are carnal, and therefore, *Rom 8.5. They that are after the flesh, are said to minde the things of the flesh.* All its desires, delights, cares, fears, are in and of carnal things; it savours spiritual food no more than an Angel fleshly. *Omnis vita gusta ducitur*: What we cannot relish we will hardly make our daily food. Every creature hath its proper diet, the Lion eats not grasse, nor the Horse flesh; what is food to the carnal heart, is poison to the gracious; and that which is pleasing to the gracious, is distasteful to the carnal. Now according to this Interpretation the sense of the Apostle is not, as if the Christian had no combat with his corrupt nature, (for in another place it's said, the Spirit lusts against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit, and this enemy is called *μαρτία του σαρκατος*, the sin that besets the Christian round) but to aggravate his conflict with this enemy by the assistance of a foreign power, Satan who strikes in with this domestic enemy. As if while a King is fighting with his own mutinous subjects, some out-landish troops should joyn with them, now he may be said not to fight with his subjects, but with a foreign power. The Christian wrestles not with his naked corruptions, but with Satan in them; were there no devil, yet we should have our hands full in resisting the corruptions of our own hearts, but the assistance of this enemy makes the battle more terrible, because he heads them who is a Captain so skilful and experienced. Our sin is the engine, Satan is the engineer; lust the bait, Satan the Angler: when a soul is enticed by his own lust, he is said to be tempted, *James 1. 14.* because both Satan and our own lust concur to the completing the sinne.

Heb. 12. 1.

First, let this make thee, Christian, ply the work of mortification close; it is no policy to let thy lusts have armes, who are sure to rise and declare against thee when thine enemies comes. *A. his* his Nobles did but wisely, in that they would not trust

Use 1.

David in their army, when to fight against *Israel*, lest in the battel he should be an adversary to them; And darest thou go to duty, or engage in any action, where Satan will appear against thee, and not endeavour to make sure of thy pride, unbelief, &c. that they joyn not with thine enemy?

2. Secondly, are Satan and thy own flesh against thee, not single corruption, but edged with his policy, and backed by his power? see then what need thou hast of more help than thy own grace; take heed of grappling with him in the strength of thy naked grace; here thou hast two to one against thee: Satan was too hard for *Adam*, though he went so well appointed into the field, because left to himself, much more easily will he foile thee; cling therefore about thy God for strength, get him with thee, and then though a worme, thou shalt be able to deal with this Serpent.

SECT. II.

2. Secondly, flesh and blood is interpreted as a *periphrasis* of man. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, that is, not with man, who is here described by that part which chiefly distinguisheth him from the Angelical nature; *Touch me*, saith Christ, *and handle me*, a Spirit hath not flesh. Now according to this Interpretation observe;

1. First, how meanly the Spirit of God speaks of man. Secondly, where he laies the streffe of the Saints battel, not in resisting flesh and blood, but Principalities and Powers; where the Apostle excludes not our combate with man, for the war is against the Serpent and his seed. As wile as the world is, it cannot peaceably hold the Saints and wicked together; but his intent is to shew, what a complicated enemy (mans wrath and Satans interwoven together) we have to deal with.

First, for the first, how meanly doth the Spirit of God speak of man, calling him flesh and blood? Man hath a Heaven-borne soul, which makes him a kin to Angels, yet, to the God of them who is the Father of Spirits; but this is passed by in silence, as if God would not own that which is tainted with sin, and not the creature God at first made it, or because the soul, though of such

such noble extraction, yet being so immerst in sensuality, deserves no other name than flesh, which part of man levels him with the beast, and is here intended to expresse the weaknesse and frailty of mans nature. 'Tis the phrase which the Holy Ghost expresseth the weaknesse and impotency of a creature by, *Isa. 31.3. They are men, and their horses are flesh*; that is, weak; as on the contrary, when he would set out the power and strength of a thing, he opposeth it to flesh, *2 Cor. 10.3. Our weapons are not carnal, but mighty*; and so in the text, not flesh and blood, but Powers. As if he should say, Had you no other to fear but a weak sorry man, it were not worth the providing armes or ammunition; but you have enemies that neither are flesh, nor are resisted with flesh; so that here we see what a weak creature man is, not only weaker than Angels, as they are Spirit, and he flesh, put in some sense beneath the beasts, as the flesh of man is frailer than the flesh of beasts, therefore the Spirit of God compares man to the grasse, which soon withers, *Isa. 40.6. and his godlinesse to the flower of the field*. Yea, he is called vanity, *Psal. 62.9. Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie*, both a like vain; only the rich and the great man, his vanity is covered with honour, wealth, &c. which are here called a lie, because they are not what they seem, and so worse than plain vanity, which is known to be so, and deceives not.

First, is man but frail flesh? I et this humble thee, O man, in *Ufe 1.* all thy excellency, flesh is but one remove from filth and corruption: Thy soul is the salt that keeps thee sweet, or else thou wouldest stink above ground. Is it thy beauty thou pridest in? Flesh is grasse, but beauty is the vanity of this vanity. This goodlinesse is like the flower, which lasts not so long as the grasse, appears in its moneth and is gone, yea, like the beauty of the flower, which fades while the flower stands. How soon will times plough make furrows in thy face, yea, one fit of an Ague so change thy countenance, as shall make thy doting lovers afraid to look on thee? Is it strength? Alas, it is an arme of flesh, which withers oft in the stretching forth; ere long thy blood which is now warm, will freeze in thy veines; thy Spring crown'd with *May-luds.* will tread on *Decembers* heel; thy marrow dry in thy bones, thy sinews shrink, thy legs bow under the weight of thy body, thy eye-springs crack, thy tongue not able to call
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for help; yea, thy heart with thy flesh shall fail; and now thou, who art such a giant, take a turne if thou canst in thy chamber, yea, raise but thy head from thy pillow if thou art able, or call back thy breath, which is making hast to be gone out of thy no^rils, never to return more; and darest thou glory in that which so soon may be prostrate.

Is it wisdom? the same grave that covers thy body, shall bury all that, (the wisdom of thy flesh I mean) all thy thoughts shall perish, and goodly plots come to nothing. Indeed, if a Christian, thy thoughts as such shall assend with thee, not one holy breathing of thy soul lost. Is it thy blood and birth? whoever thou art, thou art base-born till born again, the same blood runs in thy veins, with the beggar in the street, *Acts* 17 26. All Nations there we finde made of the same blood, in two things all are alike, we come in and goe out of the world alike; as one is not made of finer earth, so not resolved into purer dust.

Use 2.

Secondly, is man flesh? trust not in man; *Cursed be he that makes flesh his arme*. Not the mighty man; robes may hide and garnish, they cannot change flesh, *Psal.* 146. Put not your trust in Princes; alas, they cannot keep their crownes on their own heads, their heads on their own shoulders, and lookest thou for that which they cannot give themselves? Not in wise men, whose designs recoil oft upon themselves, that they cannot performe their enterprife. — *Amphora capit institui corrente rotâ cur urceus exit*. Mans carnal wisdom intends one thing, but God turnes the wheele, and brings forth another, Trust not in holy men, they have flesh, and so their judgment not infallible, yea, their way sometimes doubtful His mistake may lead thee aside, and though he returns, thou mayest go on and perish. Trust not in any man, in all men, no not in thy self, thou art flesh. *He is a fool* (saith the wise man) *that trusts his heart*. Not in the best thou art or doest, the garment of thy righteousness is spotted with the flesh; all is counted by Saint Paul, confidence in the flesh, besides our rejoycing in Christ, *Phil.* 3 3.

Use 3.

Thirdly, fear not man, he is but flesh. This was Davids resolve, *Psal.* 56. 4. *I will not fear what flesh can do unto me*; thou needst not, thou oughtst not to fear. Thou needst not. What, not such a

great

great man, not such a number of men, who have the keys of all the Prisons at their girdle, who can kill or save alive, no, not these, only look they be thy enemies for Righteousnesse sake. Take heed thou makest not the least childe thine enemy, by offering wrong to him, God will right the wicked even upon the Saint. If he offends, he shall finde no shelter under Gods wing for his sin. This made *Ferome* complain that the Christians sins made the armes of those barbarous Nations which invaded *Christendome* victorious: *Nostris peccatis fortes sunt barbari*. But if mans wrath findes thee in Gods way, and his fury take fire at thy holinesse, thou needest not fear, though thy life be the prey he hunts for. Flesh can only wound flesh, he may kill thee, but not hurt thee, why shouldest thou fear to be stript of that which thou hast resign'd already to Christ? 'Tis the first lesson thou learnest, if a Christian, to deny thy self, take up thy crosse, and follow thy Master; so that the enemy comes too late; thou hast no life to lose, because thou hast given it already to Christ, nor can man take away that without Gods leave; all thou hast is ensured; and though God hath not promised thee immunity from suffering in this kinde, yet he hath undertaken to beare thy losse, yea, to pay thee a hundred fold, and thou shalt not stay for it till another world. Again, thou ought'st not to fear flesh. Our Saviour, *Mat. 10.* thrice in the compasse of six verses, commands us not to feare man; if thy heart quailles at him, how wilt thou behave thy self in the list against Satan, whose little finger is heavier than mans loines? The *Romanes* had *arma praelusoria*; weapons rebated or cudgels, which they were tried at before they came to the sharp. If thou canst not beare a bruise in thy flesh from mans cudgel and blunt weapon, what wilt thou do when thou shalt have Satans sword in thy side? God counts himself reproached when his children feare a sorry man; therefore we are bid, Sanctifie the Lord, and not to feare their feare. Now if thou wouldest not feare man who is but flesh; Labour,

First, to mortifie thy own flesh, Flesh only feares flesh: When the soul degenerates into carnal desires and delights, no wonder he falls into carnal fears. Have a care, Christian, thou bring'st not thy self into bondage: Perhaps thy heart feeds on the applause of men, this will make thee afraid to be evil spoken

of, as those who shuffled with Christ, *John 12. 42.* owning him in private when they durst not confesse him openly, for they loved the praise of men; *David* saith, *the mouth of the wicked is an open Sepulchre*; and in this grave hath many a Saints name been buried; but if this fleshly desire were mortified, thou would'st not passe to be judg'd by man, and so of all carnal affections. Some meat you observe is aguish; if thou settest thy heart on any thing that is carnal, wife, childe, estate, &c. the'e will incline thee to a base fear of man, who may be Gods messenger to afflict thee in these.

- Secondly, set saith against flesh. Faith fixeth the heart. and a fixe d heart is not readily afraid. Physicians tell us we are never so subject to receive infection as when the spirits are low, and there'ore the antidotes they give are all cordials: When the spirit is low through unbelief, every threatening from man makes sad impression. Let thy faith take but a deep draught of the Promises, and thy courage will rise.

Fourthly, comfort thy self, Christian, with this, that as thou art flesh, so thy heavenly Father knows it, and considers thee for it.

First, in point of affliction, *Psal. 103. 14.* *He knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are but dust.* Not like some unskilful Emperick, who hath but one receipt for all, strong or weak, young or old, but as a wise Physician considers his Patient, and then writes his bill: Men and devils are but Gods Apothecaries, they make not our physick, but give what God prescribes. *Balaam* loved *Balacks* fee well enough; but could not go an hairs breadth beyond Gods Commission. Indeed God is not so choice with the wicked, *Isa. 27. 7.* *Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him?* In a Saints cup the poison of the affliction is corrected, not so in the wickeds, and therefore what is medicine to the one is ruine to the other.

Secondly, in duty; he knows you are but flesh, and therefore pities and accepts thy weak service, yea, he makes apologies for thee; *The Spirit is willing*, saith Christ, *but the flesh is weak.*

Thirdly, in temptations; he considers thou art flesh, and proportions the temptation to so weak a nature: 'tis call'd *πρασυδς ἀνθρώπου*, such a temptation as is common to man, a moderate

rate temptation (as in the margin) fitted for so frail a creature. Whenever the Christian begins to faint under the weight of it, God makes as much haste to his succour, as a tender mother would to her swooning child: therefore he is said to be nigh, to revive such, lest their spirit should fail.

SECT. III.

The second thing follows: The conjuncture of the Saints enemies; We have not to do with naked man, but with man led on by Satan; not with flesh and blood, but Principalities and Powers acting in them. There are two sorts of men the Christian wrestles with, good men and bad. Satan strikes in with both.

First, the Christian wrestles with good men. Many a sharp conflict there hath been betwixt Saint and Saint, scuffling in the dark through mis-understanding of the truth, and each other: *Abraham* and *Lot* at strife. *Aaron* and *Miriam* justified with *Moses* for the wall, till God interposed and ended the quarrel by his immediate stroke on *Miriam*. The Apostles even in the presence of their Master, were at high words, contesting who should be greatest. Now in these Civil wars among Saints, Satan is the great kindle-coal, though little seen, because, like *Abab*, he fights in a disguise, playing first on the one side, and then on the other, aggravating every petty injury, and thereupon provoking to wrath and revenge: Therefore the Apostle dehorting from anger, useth this argument, *Give no place to the devil*; as if he had said, Fall not out among your selves, except you long for the devils company, who is the true fouldier of fortune (as the common phrase is) living by his sword, and therefore hasts thither where there is any hope of war. *Gregory* compares the Saints in their sad differences to two cocks, which Satan the Master of the pit sets on fighting, in hope, when kill'd to sup with them at night. *Solomon* saith, Prov. 18.6. *The mouth of the contentious man cal's for strokes*. Indeed we by our mutual frifes give the devil a staffe to beat us with; he cannot well work without fire, and therefore blows up these coales of contention, which he useth at his forge, to heat our spirits into wrath, and then we

are maleable, easily hamer'd as he pleaseth. Contention puts the soul into disorder, and *inter arma silent leges*. The Law of grace acts not freely, when the Spirit is in a commotion; meek *Moses* provok't, speaks unadvisedly. Me thinks this (if nothing else will) should found a retreat to our unhappy differences, that this *Joab* hath a hand in them, he sets this evil Spirit betwixt brethren, and what folly is it for us to bite and devour one another to make hell sport? We are prone to mistake our heat for zeal, whereas commonly in strifes between Saints, it is a fire-ship sent in by Satan to break their unity and order; wherein while they stand they are an Armado invincible, and Satan knowes he hath no other way but this to shatter them: When the Christians language which should be one, begins to be confounded, they are then neare a scattering; 'tis time for God to part his children, when they cannot live in peace together.

2.

Secondly, the Christian wrestles with wicked men. *Because you are not of the world, saith Christ, the world hates you.* The Saints nature and life are Antipodes to the world, fire and water, heaven and hell, may assoon be reconciled as they with it. The Heretick is his enemy for truths sake, the prophane for holiness, to both the Christian is an abomination, as the *Israelite* to the *Egyptian*; hence come wars, the fire of persecution never goes out in the hearts of the wicked, who say in their hearts as they once with their lips, *Christiani ad leones*. Now in all the Saints wars with the wicked, Satan is Commander in chief, 'tis their fathers work they do, his lusts they fulfil. The *Sabeans* plunder'd *Job*, but went on Satans errand. The Heretick broacheth corrupt Doctrine, perverts the faith of many, but in that the Minister of Satan, *2 Cor. 11. 15.* they have their call, their wiles and wages from him. Persecutors, their work ascribed to hell; is it a persecution of the tongue? 'Tis hell sets it on fire; is it of the hand? Still they are but the devils instruments, *Rev. 2. 10. The devil shall cast some of you into prison.*

Use 1.

First, do you see any driving furiously against the truths or servants of Christ? O pity them as the most miserable wretches in the world, fear not their power, admire not their parts, they are men possessed of, and acted by the devil, they are his drudges and slaughter-slaves, as a Martyr call'd them. *Augustine* in
his

his Epistle to *Lycinius*, one of excellent parts, but wicked, who once was his Scholar, speaks thus pathetically to him: O how I could weep and mourn over thee, to see such a sparkling wit prostituted to the devils service! If thou hadst found a golden Chalice thou wouldest have given it to the Church, but God hath given thee a golden head, parts and wit, and in this *propinas teipsum Diabolo*, thou drinkest thy self to the devil. When you see men of power and parts, using them against God that gave them, weep over them; better they had lived and died, the one slaves, the other fools, than do the devil such service with them.

Secondly, O ye Saints, when reproached and persecuted, look *use 2.* further than man, spend not your wrath upon him; alas, they are but instruments in the devils hand; save your displeasure for Satan who is thy chief enemy, the more may be won to Christs side, and so become thy friends at last. Now and then we see some running away from the devils colours, and washing the wounds with their tears, which they have made by their cruelty. 'Tis a notable passage in *Anselme*, who compares the Heretick and Persecutor to the Horse, any the devil to the Rider. Now, saith he, in battel, when the enemy comes riding up, the valiant Soldier, *Non irascitur equo, sed equiti, & quantum potest agit ut equitem percutiat, equum possideat; sic contra malos homines agendum, non contra illos, sed illum qui illos intigat, ut dum Diabolus vincitur, infelices quos ille possidet liberentur*: He is angry not with the horse but horseman, he labours to kill the man that he may possess the horse for his use: Thus must we do with the wicked, we are not to bend our wrath against them, but Satan that rides them, and spurs them on, labouring by prayer for them as Christ did on the Cross, to dismount the devil, that so these miserable souls hackneyed by him may be delivered from him. 'Tis more honour to take one soul alive out of the devils clutches, than to leave many slain upon the field. *Erasmus* saith of *Augustine*, that he begged the lives of those hereticks, at the hands of the Emperours Officers, who had been bloody persecutors of the Orthodox; *Cupiebat*, saith he, *amicus medicus superesse, quos arte sua sanaret*. Like a kinde Physician he desired their life, that if possible he might work a cure on them, and make them sound in the faith.



CHAP. II.

Wherein is shewen, what a Principality Satan hath, how he came to be such a Prince, and how we may know whether we be under him as our Prince, or not.

VERSE 12. -

But against Principalities and Powers, &c.

SECT. I.

THe Apostle having shewen what the Saints enemies are not, *flesh and blood*, frail men, who cannot come but they are seen, who may be resisted with mans power, or escape by flight; now he describes them Positively, *against Principalities, against Powers, &c.* Some think the Apostle by these divers names and titles; intends to set forth the distinct orders, whereby the devils are one subordinate to another, so they make the Devil, *verse 11.* to be the Head or Monarch, and these, *verse 12.* so many inferiour orders, as among men there are Princes, Dukes, Earles, &c. under an Emperour. That there is an order among the devils cannot be denied. The Scripture speaks of a *Prince of devils*, *Matth. 9.* and of *the Devil and his Angels*, who with him fell from their first station, called his Angels as it's probably conceived, because one above the rest (as the head of the faction) drew with him multitudes of other into his party, who with him sinned and fell. But that there should be so many distinct orders among them, as there are several branches in this description, is not probable; too weak a notion to be the
foun-

foundation of a Pulpit-discourse, therefore we shall take them as meant of the devil collectively. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but devils, who are Principalities, Powers, &c. and not distributively, to make Principalities one rank, Powers another; for some of these branches cannot be meant of distinct orders, but promiscuously of all as spiritual wickedness; it being not proper to one to be spirits or wicked, but common to all.

First, then the devil or whole pack of them are here described by their Government in this world, *Principalities*.

Secondly, by their strength and puissance, called *Powers*.

Thirdly, by their nature in its substance and degeneracy, *Spiritual wickednesses*.

Fourthly, in their Kingdom or proper Territories, *Rulers of the darkness of this world*.

Fifthly, by the ground of the war, *In heavenly places, or about heavenly things*.

First, of the first, *Principalities*; ἀρχαί, the abstract of the concrete, that is, such as have a Principality; So, *Titus* 3. 1. we are bid to be *subject to Principalities and Powers*, that is, Princes and Rulers, so the vulgar reads it. We wrestle against Princes, which some will have to expresse the eminency of their nature above mans, that as the state and spirit of Princes is more raised than others great men have great spirits, as Zeba and Zalmunna to Gideon, asking who they were they slew at Tabor; *As thou art, (say they) so were they, each one resembled the children of a King*, that is, for Majesty and Presence befitting a Prince's race; so they think, the eminent nature of Angels here to be intended, who are as far above the highest Prince, as he above the basest peasant; but because they are described by their nature in the fourth branch, I shall subscribe to their judgment, who take this for their Principality or Government, which the devil exerciseth in this lower world; and the Note shall be,

That Satan is a great Prince, Christ himself styles him the *Prince of the world*, John 14. Princes have their thrones where they sit in state; Satan hath his, *Rev.* 2. 13. *Thou dwellest where Satan hath his throne*; and that such a one as no earthly Prince may compare; few Kings are enthron'd in the hearts of their subjects, they rule their bodies, and command their purses, but how

oft

I.

Doct.

off in a day are they pull'd out of their thrones by the wishes of their discontented subjects: But Satan hath the heart of all his subjects. Princes have their homage and peculiar honour done to them; Satan is served upon the knee of his subjects, the wicked are said to *worship the devil*, Rev. 13. 4. No Prince expects such worship as he, no lesse than religious worship will serve him, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15. *Jeroboam* there is said to ordain Priests for devils, and therefore he is call'd not only the Prince, but the god of this world, because he hath the worship of a god given him. Princes such as are absolute have a Legislative Power, nay, their own will is their law, as at this day in *Turkey*, where their Laws are writ in no other Tables, than in the proud *Sultans* breast; thus Satan gives Law to the poor sinner, who is bound and must obey, though the Law be writ wth his own b^oud, and the creature hath nothing but damnation for fulfilling the devils lust; 'tis call'd a *Law of sinne*, Rom. 8. 2. because it comes with authority; Princes have their Ministers of State, whom they employ for the safety and enlargement of their Territories: So Satan his, 2 *Cor.* 11. 15. who propagates his cursed designs, therefore we read of *doctrine of devils*. Princes have their *Arcana Imperii*, which none knowes but a few Favourites in whom they confide: Thus the devil hath his myteries of iniquity, and depths of Satan we reade of, which all his subjects know not of, Rev. 2. 24. these are imparted to a few Favourites, such as *Elymas*, whom *Paul* calls full of subtilty, and childe of the devil; such, whose consciences are so debauched, that they scruple not the most horrid sins, these are his white boyes. I have read of a people in *America*, that love meat best when 'tis rotten and stinks. The devil is of their diet, the more corrupt and rotten the creature is in sinne, the better he pleaseth his tooth; some are more the children of the devil than others. Christ had his beloved disciple; and Satan those that lie in his very bosome, and know what is in his heart. In a word, Princes have their *Vestigalia*, their tribute and custome; so Satan his. Indeed he doth not so much share with the sinner in all, but is owner of all he hath, so that the devil is the Merchant, and the sinner but the Broker to trade for him, who at last puts all his gaines into the devils purse: Time, strength, parts, yea, conscience and all spent to keep him in his throne.

SECT.

SECT. II

But how comes Satan to this Principality?

Not lawfully though he can shew a fair claim. As,

First, he obtained it by conquest, as he won his crown; so he wears it by power and policy. But conquest is a crack't title. A thief is not the honestest, because able to force the traveller to deliver his purse; & a thie upon the throne is no better than a private one on the road, one Pyrate in a Pinnace, as he boldly told *Alexander*. Neither doth that prove good with procelle of time, which was evil at first: Satan indeed hath kept possession long, but a thief will be so as long, as he keeps his stolen goods? He stole the heart of *Adam* from God at first, and doth no better to this day. Christs Conquest is good, because the ground of the war righteous, to recover what was his own, which Satan cannot say of the meanest creature, 'Tis my own.

Secondly, Satan may lay claim to his Principality by Election; 'Tis true he came in by a wile, but now he is a Prince elected, by the unanimous voice of corrupt nature; *Ye are of your father the devil, saith Christ, and his lusts ye will do.* But this also hath a flaw in it, for man by law of Creation is Gods subject, and cannot give away Gods right; by sin he loseth his right in God, as a Protector; but God loseth not his right as a Sovereign. Sin disabled man to keep Gods Law, but it doth not enfranchise or dis-oblige him that he need not keep it.

Thirdly, Satan may claim a deed of gift from God himself, as he was bold to do to Christ himself upon this ground, perswading him to worship him as the Prince of the world, *Luke 4. 5, 6. He shewed unto him all the Kingdomes of the world, saying, All this will I give thee, for that is delivered to me, and to whomsoever I will I give it.* Where there was a truth, though he spake more than the truth, (as he cannot speak truth, but to gain credit to some lie at the end of it.) God in judgement delivered in a sense this world to him, but not in his sense to do what he will with it, nor by any approbatory act given him a Patent to vouch him his vice-Roy, not Satan by the grace of God, but by the permission of God Prince of the world.

Bb

But

Quest.
Ans.

2.

3.

Quest. But why doth God permit this Apostate-creature, to exercise such a Principality over the world?

Ans. First, as a righteous act of vengeance on Man, for revolting from the sweet Government of his rightfull Lord and Maker: 'Tis the way that God punisheth rebellion; Because ye would not serve me in gladnesse in the abundance of all things, therefore ye shall serve your enemies in hunger, &c. Satan is a King given in Gods wrath. Chims curse is mans punishment, a *Servant of servants*. The devil is Gods slave, man the devils. Sin hath set the devil on the creatures back, and now he hurries him without mercy, (as he did the swine) till he be choak't with flames, if mercy interpose not.

Secondly, God permits this his Principality, in order to the glorifying of his Name in the recovery of his elect from the power of this great Potentate. What a glorious Name will God have when he hath finished this war, wherein at first he found all possided by this enemy, and not a man of all the sons of *Adam* to offer himself as a Voluntier in this service, till made willing by the day of his Power? This, this will gain God a Name above every name, not only of creatures, but of those by which himself was known to his creature. The workmanship of heaven and earth gave him the name of Creatour, Providence of Preserver, but this of Saviour, wherein he doth both the former, preserve his creature which else had been lost, and create a new creature, I mean the Babe of Grace, which, through God, shall be able to beat the devil out of the field, who was able to drive *Adam* (though created in his full stature) out of Paradise, and may not all the other works of God empty themselves as rivers into this sea, losing their names, or rather swelling into one of Redemption? Had not Satan taken Gods Elect Prisoners, they would not have gone to heaven with such acclamations of tryumph. There are three expressions of a great joy in Scripture; the joy of a woman after her travel, the joy of harvest, & the joy of him that devideth the spoil: The exultation of all these is wrought upon a sad ground, many a pain & tear it costs the travelling woman, many a fear the husbandman, perils and wounds the souldier, before they come at their joy, but at last are paid for all, the remembrance of their past sorrows feeding their present joyes. Had Christ come and entered into affinity with
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our nature, and return'd peaceably to heaven with his Spouse, finding no resistance; though this would have been admirable love, and that would have afforded the joy of marriage, yet this way of carrying it is Saints to heaven will greaten the joy, as it adds to the nuptial Song, the triumph of a Conquerour, who hath rescued his Bride out of the hands of Satan, as he was leading her to the chambers of hell.

SECT. III.

Is Satan such a great Prince? try whose subject thou art. His *Use* 1. Empire is large, only a few priviledg'd, who are translated into the Kingdome of Gods dear Son; even in Christs own territories, (visible Church I mean) where his name is profess'd, and the Scepter of his Gospel held forth, there Satan hath his subjects. As Christ had his Saints in Nero's Court; so the devil his servants in the outward Court of his visible Church. Thou must therefore have something more to exempt thee from his Government, then living within the pale, and giving an outward conformity to the Ordinances of Christ, Satan will yield to this and be no loser: As a King lets his Merchants trade to, yea, live in a forreign Kingdome, & while they are there learn the language, and observe the customes of the place; this breaks not their allegiance, nor all that thy loyalty to Satan. When a Statute was made in Queen *Elizabeths* reign, that all should come to Church, the Papists sent to *Rome* to know the Popes pleasure, he returnd them this answer, (as 'tis said) *Eid the Catholicks in England give me their heart, and let the Queen take the rest.* His subject thou art whom thou crownest in thy heart, and not whom thou flatterest with thy lips.

But to bring the trial to an issue, know thou belongest to one of these, and but to one, Christ and Satan divide the whole world; Christ will bear no equal, and Satan no Superiour, and therefore hold in with both thou canst not. Now if thou sayest Christ be thy Prince, answer to these Interrogatories.

First, how came he into the throne? Satan had once the quiet possession of thy heart: thou wast by birth as the rest of thy neighbours, Satans vassal, yea, hast oft vouch't him in the course

of thy life to be thy Liege Lord, how then comes this great chāge? Satan surely would not of his own accord resigne his Crown and Scepter to Christ; and for thy self thou wert neither willing to renounce, nor able to resist his power: This then must only be the fruit of Christs victorious armes, whom *God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, Acts 5.31.* Speak therefore, hath Christ come to thee, as once *Abraham* to *Lot*, when prisoner to *Kederlaomer*, rescuing thee out of Satans hands, as he was lading thee in chains of lust to hell? Didst thou ever hear a voice from heaven in the Ministry of the Word calling out to thee as once to *Saul*, so as to lay thee at Gods foot, and make thee face about for heaven, to strike thee blinde in thine own apprehension, who before hadst a good opinion of thy state, to tame and meeken thee: so as now thou art willing to be led by the hand of a child after Christ? Did ever Christ come to thee, as the Angel to *Peter* in prison, rowling thee up, and not only causing the chaines of darknesse and stupidity to fall off thy minde and conscience, but make thee obedient also, that the iron gate of thy will hath opened to Christ before he left thee? Then thou hast something to say for thy freedome: But if in all this I be a Barbarian, and the language I speak be strang, thou knowest no such work to have passed upon thy spirit, then thou art yet in the old prison; can there be a change of Government in a Nation by a Conquerour that invades it, and the subjects not hear of this? One King unthrone'd, and another crowned in thy soule, and thou hear no scuffle all this while? The regenerating Spirit is compared to the *winde*, *John 3.8.* His first attempts on the soul may be so secret, that the creature knows not whence they come, or whither they tend; but before he hath done, the *sound* will be heard throughout the soul, so as it cannot but see a great change in it self, and say, I that was blinde, now I see; I that was as hard as ice, now relenting for sin: now my heart gives, I can melt and mourn for it. I that was well enough without a Christ, yea, did wonder what others saw in him, to make such ado for him, now have changed my note with the *Daughters of Jerusalem*; & for what, is your Beloved (as I scornfully have ask't) I have learn't to ask where he is, that I might seek him with you O soul! canst thou say 'tis thus with thee, thou mayest know who has been here; no lesse than

than Christ, who by his victorious Spirit hath translated thee from Satans power into his own sweet Kingdom.

Secondly, whose law doest thou freely subje^t thy self unto? The laws of these Princes are as contrary as their natures; the one a law of sin, *Rom.* 8.2. the other a law of holiness, *Rom.* 7.12. and therefore if sin hath not so far bereaved thee of thy wits, as not to know sin from holiness, thou mayest, (except resolve to cheat thy own soul) soon be resolved; confesse therefore and give glory to God, to which of these laws doth thy soul set its sea? When Satan sends out his Proclamation, and bids sinner go, set thy foot upon such a command of God, observe what is thy behaviour, dost thou yield thy self, as Paul phraseth it, *Rom.* 6.16 *παισδύεσθαι*, a metaphor from Princes servants or others, who are said *παισδύειν εαυτούς*, to present themselves before their Lord, as ready and at hand to do their pleasure, by which the *Apostle* elegantly describes the forwardness of the sinners heart to come to Satans foot, when knock or call; Now doth thy soul go out thus to meet thy lust, (as *Aaron* his brother glad to see its face in an occasion; thou art not brought over to sin with much ado, but thou likest the command: *Transgresse at Gilgal*, (saith God) *this liketh you well*, *Hos.* 4.5. As a Courtier, who doth not only obey, but thank his Prince that hee'll employ him. Need'st thou be long in resolving whose thou art? did ever any question, whether those were *Jeroboams* subjects, who willingly followed his command? *Hos.* 5.11. Alas, for thee, thou art under the power of Satan, tied by a chain stronger than brass or iron; thou lovest thy lust. A Saint may be for a time under a force, *sold under sin*, as the *Apostle* bemoans, and therefore glad when deliverance comes, but thou sellest thy self to work iniquity. If Christ should come to take thee from thy lusts, thou wouldest whine after them, as *Micah* after his gods.

Thirdly, to whom goest thou for protection? as it belongs to the Prince to protect his subjects. so Princes expect their subjects should trust them with their safety; the very bramble bids, *Judg.* 9.15. *If in truth you anoint me King, then put your trust under my shadow.* Now who hath thy confidence? Darest thou trust God with thy soul, and the affairs of it in well-doing? Good subjects follow their calling, commit State-matters to the wis-

dom of their Prince and his Council ; when wrong'd, they appeal to their Prince in his Laws for right ; and when they doe offend their Prince, they submit to the penalty of the Laws, and beare his displeasure patiently, till humbling themselves they recover his favour, and doe not in a discontent fall to open rebellion. Thus a gracious soul follows his Christian calling, committing himself to God as a faithful Creatour, to be ordered by his wise Providence. If he meets with violence from any, he scorns to beg aid of the devil to help him, or be his own Judge to right himself; No, he acquiesceth in the counsel and comfort the Word of God gives him. If himself offends, and so comes under the lash of Gods correcting hand, he doth not then take up rebellious armes against God, and refuse to receive correction, but saith, *Why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sin* ; whereas a naughty man dares not venture his estate, life, credit, or any thing he hath with God in well-doing, he thinks he shall be undone presently, if he sits still under the shadow of Gods promise for protection ; and therefore he runs from God as from under an old house that would fall on his head, and laies the weight of his confidence in wicked policy, making lies his refuge, like Israel, *he trusts in perverseness*, when God tells him, *In returning and rest he shall be saved, in quietnesse and confidence shall be his strength* : He hath not faith to take Gods Word for his security in wayes of obedience. And when God comes to afflict him for any disloyal carriage, in stead of accepting the punishment for his sin, and so to own him for his Sovereign Lord, that may righteously punish the faults of his disobedient subjects, his heart is fill'd with rage against God, and in stead of waiting quietly and humbly, (like a good subject) will God upon his repentance receives him into his favour, his wretched heart (presenting God as an enemy to him) will not suffer any such gracious and amiable thought of God to dwell in his bosome, but bids him look for no good at his hand. *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait on the Lord any longer?* whereas a gracious heart is most encouraged to wait from this very consideration that drives the other away ; Because 'tis the Lord afflicts, *Micah 7. 6.*

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Fourthly, whom dost thou sympathize with? he is thy Prince, whose victories and losses thou layest to heart, whether
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In thy own botome, or abroad in the world. What saith thy soul, when God hedgeth up thy way, and keeps thee from that sin which Satan hath been soliciting for? If on Christs side thou wilt rejoyce when thou art delivered out of a temptation, though it be by falling into an affliction; as *David* said of *Abigail*, so wilt thou here: Blessed be the Ordinance, blessed be the Providence which kept me from sinning against my God; but if otherwise thou wilt harbour a secret grudge against the Word which stood in thy way, and be discontented, thy designe took not. A naughty heart (like *Amnon*) pines while his lust hath vent, Again, what musick doth the achievements of Christ in the world make in thy ear? When thou hear'st the Gospel thrives, the blinde see, the lame walk, the poor gospellized, doth thy spirit rejoyce in that hour? If a Saint, thou wilt, as God is thy Father, rejoyce thou hast more brethren born; as he is thy Prince, that the multitude of his subjects increase; so when thou seest the plots of Christs enemies discovered, powers defeated, canst thou goe forth with the Saints to meet King Jesus, & ring him out of the field with praises? or doe thy bells ring backward, and such news make thee haste like *Haman*, mourning to thine house, there to empty thy spirit swolne with rancour against his Saints & truth? or if thy policy can master thy passion, so far as to make fair weather in thy countenance, and suffer thee to joyn with the people of God in their acclamations of joy, yet then art thou a closer mourner within, and likest the work no better than *Haman* his office in holding *Mordecai*'s stirrup, who had rather have held the ladder; this speaks thee a certain enemy to Christ, how handsomely soever thou mayest carry it before men.

Secondly, blesse God, O ye Saints, who upon the former trial can say, you are translated into the Kingdom of Christ, and so delivered from the tyranny of this usurper: There are few but have some one gaudy day in a year which they solemnize; some keep their birth-day, others their marriage; some their manumission from a cruel service, others their deliverance from some imminent danger; here is a mercy where all these meet. You may call it, as *Adam* did his wife, *Chavah*, the mother of all the living; every mercy riseth up and calls this blessed; this is thy birth-day, thou wert before, but beganst to live, when Christ began

Use 2.

began to live in thee, the father of the Prodigal dated his sons life from his returne; *This my son was dead, and is live.* It is thy marriage-day; *I have married you to one husband, even Christ Jesus,* saith Paul to the Corinthians. Perhaps thou hast enjoyed this thy husbands sweet company many a day, and had a numerous off-springs of joyes and comforts by thy fellowship with him, the thought of which cannot but endear him to thee, and make the day of thy espousals delightful to thy memory; 'Tis thy manumission, then were thy Indentures cancell'd, wherein thou wert bound to sin and Satan; when the sonne made thee free, thou becamest free indeed: Thou canst not say thou wast born free, for thy father was a slave, not that thou boughtest thy freedom with a summe; *By grace ye are saved.* Heaven is setled on thee in the promise, and thou not at charge so much as for the writings drawing. All is done at Christ his cost, with whom God indented, and to whom he gave the promise of eternal life before the world began, as a free estate to settle upon every believing soul in the day they should come to Christ, and receive him for their Prince and Saviour; so that from the hour thou didst come under Christs shadow, all the sweet fruit that grows on this tree of life is thine; with Christ all that both worlds have falls to thee: *All is yours,* because *you are Christs.* O Christian, look upon thy self now, and blesse thy God to see what a change there is made in thy state, since that black and dismal time, when thou wert slave to the Prince of darknesse; how couldest thou like thy old Scullions work again; or think of returning to thy house of bondage? now thou knowest the priviledges of Christs Kingdomes. Great Princes, who from basenesse and beggary have ascended to Kingdoms and Empires, (to adde to the joy of their present honour) have delighted to speak often of their base birth; to go and see the mean cottages where they were first entertained, & had their birth & breeding, and the like. And 'tis not unuseful for the Christian to look in at the grate, to see the smoaky hole where once he lay, to view the chains where with he was laden, and so to compare Christs Court, and the devils prison: the felicity of the one, and the horror of the other together. But when we do our best to affect our hearts with this me cy by all the inhancing aggravations we can find out. Alas, how little a portio of it shal we know here? this is a

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nimum excellens, which cannot be fully seen, unlesse it be by a glorified eye; how can it be fully known by us, where it cannot be fully enjoyed? thou art translated into the Kingdome of Christ, but thou art a great way from his Court. That is kept in heaven, and that the Christian knows, but as we far countries which we never saw, only by map, or some rarities that are sent us as a taste of what grows there in abundance.

Thirdly, this (Christian) calls for thy loyalty and faithful service to Christ, who hath saved thee from Satans bondage. *Use 3.* Say, O ye Saints, to Christ, as they to *Gideon*, Come thou and rule over us, for thou hast delivered us from the hand, not of *Midean*, but of Satan. Who so able to defend thee from his wrath, as he who broke his power? who like to rule thee so tenderly, as he that could not brook anothers tyranny over thee? In a word, who hath right to thee besides him, who ventur'd his life to redeem thee? *that being delivered from all thine enemies, thou mayest serve him without fear in holiness all the daies of thy life.* And were it not pity that Christ should take all this pains to lift up thy head from Satans house of bondage, & give thee a place among those in his own house, who are admitted to minister unto him, (which is the highest honour the nature of men or Angels is capable of,) & that thou shouldest after all this be found to have a hand in any treasonable practice against thy dear Saviour? surely Christ may think he hath deserved better at your hands, if at none besides. Where shall a Prince safely dwel, if not in the midst of his own Courtiers; & those such who were all taken from chains & prisons to be thus prefer'd, the more to oblige them in his service? Let devils & devillish men do their own work, but let not thy hand (O Christian) be upon thy dear Saviour. But this is too little to bid thee not play the traitour. If thou hast any loyal blood running in thy veins, thy own heart will smite thee when thou rendest the least skirt of his holy Law; thou canst as well carry burning coals in thy bosome, as hide any treason there against thy dear Sovereign. No, 'tis some noble enterprise I would have thee think upon, how thou mayest advance the Name of Christ higher in thy heart, and world too as much as in thee lies. O how kindly did God take it, that *David* (when peaceably set in his thron) was casting about, not how he might entertain himself with those pleasures, which usually corrupt &

debauch the Courts of Princes in times of peace, but how he might shew his zeal for God, in building a house for his worship, that had rear'd a throne for him, 2 Sam. 7. And is there nothing (Christian) thou canst think on, wherein thou mayest eminently be instrumental for God in thy generation? He is not a good subject that is all for what he can get of his Prince, but never thinks what service he may do for him. Nor he the true Christian, whose thoughts dwell more on his own happiness than the honour of his God. If subjects might chuse what life stands best for their own enjoyment, all would desire to live at Court with their Prince: But because the Princes honour is more to be valued than this. Therefore noble spirits (to do their Prince service) can deny themselves the delicacies of a Court, to jeopard their lives in the field, and thank their Prince too for the honour of their employment. Blessed Paul upon these termes was willing to have his day of coronation in glory prorogued, & he to stay as companion with his brethren in tribulation here, for the furtherance of the Gospel. This indeed makes it *opera pretium vivere*, worth the while to live, that we have by it a faire opportunity, (if hearts to husband it) in which we may give a proof of our real gratitude to our God, for his redeeming love in rescuing us out of the power of the Prince of darkness, and translating us into the Kingdome of his dear Son. And therefore (Christian) lose no time, but what thou meanest to do for God, do it quickly: Art thou a Magistrate? now it will be soon seen on who's side thou art; if indeed thou hast renounced allegiance to Satan, and taken Christ for thy Prince, declare thy selfe an enemy to all that bear the name of Satan, and march under his colours. Study well by commission, and when thou understandest the duty of thy place, fall to work zealously for God. Thou hast thy Princes sword put into thy hand, be sure thou use it, and take heed how thou usest it; that when call'd to deliver it up, and thy account al'd, it may not be found rusty in the sheath through sloth and cowardie, besmeared with the blood of violence, nor bent an' gap't with partiality and injustice. Art thou a Minister of the Gospel? thy employment is high, an Ambassadour, and that not from some petty Prince, but the great God to his rebellious subjects. A calling so honourable, that the Son of God disdain'd not to come in extraordinary from heaven-

ven to perform it, call'd therefore *the messenger of the Covenant*; Mal. 3. 1. yea, he hath to this day stay'd on earth in person about it, had he not been call'd to reside as our *Ambassadour*. And advocate in heaven with the Father: and therefore in his bodily absence he hath intrusted thee and a few more to carry on the Treaty with sinners, which when on earth himselfe began. And what can you do more acceptable to him, then to be faithfull in it, as a businesse on which he hath set his heart so much? As ever you would see his sweet face with joy, (you that are his *Ambassadours*) attend to your work, and labour to bring this Treaty of Peace to a blessed issue between God and those you are sent to. And then if sinners will not come off, and seal the Articles of the Gospel, you shall (as *Abraham* said to his servant) be cleare of your oath. Though *Israel* be not gathered, yet you shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord. And let not the private Christian say he is a dry tree, and can do nothing for Christ his Prince, because he may not beare the Magistrates fruit or Ministers. Though thou hast not a commission to punish the sins of others with the sword of justice, yet thou mayest shew thy zeal, in mortifying thy own with the sword of the Spirit, and mourne for theirs also: though thou mayest not condemne them on the bench, yet thou mayest, yea, oughtest by the power of a holy life to convince and judge them. Such a Judge *Lot* was to the *Sodomites*. Though thou art not sent to preach and baptize, yet thou mayest be wonderfull helpfull to them who are. The Christians prayers whet Magistrates and Ministers sword also. O pray, Christian and pray again, that Christs Territories may be enlarged: never go to hear the Word, but pray, *Thy Kingdome come*. Loving Princes take great content in the acclamations and good wishes of their subjects as they passe by. *A vivat rex*, Long live the King, coming from a loyal breath, though poor, is more worth then a sul'd cry from those who deny their hearts while they part with their money. Thou servest a Prince (Christian) who knowes what all his subjects think of him, and he counts it his honour, not to have a multitude feinedly submit to him, but to have a people that love him and cordially like his government; who if they were to chuse their King, and make their own lawes they should live under every day, would desire no other then himself, nor any other lawes then what they have already from his mouth, it was

no doubt great content to David, that he had the hearts of his people so; as *whatever the King did, pleased them all*. And surely God took it as well, that what he did pleased David; for indeed David was as content under the rule and disposure of God as the people were under his; witnesse the calmnesse of his Spirit in the greatest affliction that ever befell him, 2 Sam, 15. 26. *Behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him*. Loyal soule! he had rather live in exile with the good Will of God, then have his throne, if God will not say 'tis good for him.



CHAP. IV.

*Of the great power Satan hath not
only over the elementary and sensitive part of the
world, but intellectual also, the soules of men.*

SECT. I.

THis is the Second Branch of the Description, wherein Satan is set forth by his might and Power. This gives weight to the former, were he a Prince, and not able to raise a force that might dread the Saints, the swelling name of Prince were contemptible; but he hath power answerable to his dignity, which in five particulars will appear.

1. First, in his names; Secondly, his nature; Thirdly, his number; Fourthly, his order and unity; Lastly, the mighty works that are attributed to him.

First, for the first, he hath names of great power, called the *strong man*, Luke 11. 21. so strong that he keeps his house in peace in defiance of all the sons of Adam, none on earth being able to cope with this giant: Christ must come from Heaven to destroy him and his works, or the field is lost. He is call'd the
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roaring lion, which beſt comman is the whole forreſt; If he roares all tremble, yea in ſuch a manner, as *Pliny* relates, that he goes amongſt them, and they ſtand ex-nimiated while he chooſeth his prey without reſiſt-nce; ſuch a lion is Satan, who leads ſinners captive at his will, 2 Tim 3. 26. *He takes them alive*, as the word is, as the Fowler the bird, which with a little ſcrap is enticed into the net; or as the Conqueror his cowardly enemy, who has no heart to fight, but yields without conteſt. Such cowards the devil finds ſinners, he no ſooner appears in a motion, but they yield: They are but a very few noble ſpirits and thoſe are the children of the moſt High God, who dare valiantly oppoſe him, and in ſtriving againſt ſin reſiſt to blood. He is call'd the *great red dragon*, who with his taile, wicked men his inſtruments, ſweeps down the third part of the ſtars of Heaven. *The Prince of the power of the aire*, becauſe as a Prince can muſter his ſubjects, and draw them into the field for his ſervice, ſo the devil can raiſe the *poſſe calli aërii*. In a word, he is call'd the God of this world, 2 Cor 4. 4. becauſe ſinners give him a God-like worſhip, feare him as the Saints do God himſelfe.

Secondly, the devils nature ſhewes his power: 'Tis Angelical. *Bleſſe the Lord, yea his angels, that excel in ſtrength*, Pſal. 103. 20. Strength is put for Angels. Pſal. 78. 25. *They did eat Angels food*, Heb. the food of the mighty. In two things the power of Angelical nature will appear; In its Superiority, and in its Spirituality.

First, its Superiority, Angels are the top of the Creation; man himſelf made a little lower then the Angels. Now in the works of Creation, the Superior hath a power over the Inferior; the beaſts over the graſſe and herb, man over the beaſts, and Angels over man.

Secondly, the Spirituality of their nature. The weakneſſe of man is from his fleſh: his ſoul made for great enterprizes, but weighed down with a lump of fleſh, iſforced to rowe with a ſtrength ſuit-able to its weak Partner; but now the devils being Angels have no ſuch incumbrance, no tumes from a fleſhly part to cloud their underſtanding, which is clear and piercing; no clog at their heele to retard their motion, which for ſwiftneſſe is ſet out by the winde and flame of fire. Yea, being ſpiritual they

cannot be resisted with carnal force, fire and sword hurt not them. The Angel which appear'd to *Manoah*, went up in the fire that consumed the sacrifice, though such had been the doctrine, and is at this day of superstitious ones, that they think to charme the devil with their carnal exorcismes; hence the Romish Reliques, Crosse, holy water, yea, and among the Jewes themselves in corrupter times, who thought by their phylacteries and circumcision, to scare away the devil, which made some of them expounded that, *Cant 3. 8. of Circumcilion, Every man hath his sword on his thigh, because of feare in the night* By sword on the thigh, they expound Circumcilion, which they will vainly have given as a charme against evil spirits that affright them in the night. But alas, the devil cares for none of these, no, not for an Ordinance of God, when by fleshly confidence we make it a spell: he hath been often bound with these fetters and chaines, (as is said of him in the Gospel) and the chaines have been plucked a sunder by him, neither could any man thus tame him. He esteems, as *Job* saith of the *Leviathan*, *iron as straw and brasse as rotten wood*. It must be a stronger then the strong man must binde him, and none stronger but God the Father of spirits. The devil lost indeed by his fall much of his power, in relation to that holy and happy estate in which he was created, but not his natural abilities, he is an Angel still, and hath an Angels power.

3. Thirdly, the number of devils addes to their power. What lighter then the sand? yet number makes it weighty? what creature lesse then lice? yet what plague greater to the Egyptians? How formidable then must devils be, who are both for nature so mighty, and for number such a multitude? there are devils enough to beleaguer the whole earth; not a place under heaven where Satan hath not his troops; not a person without some of these cursed spirits haunting and watching him where-ever he goes; yea, for some special service he can send a legion to keep garrison in one single person, as, *Mark 5.* and if so many can be spared to attend one, to what a number would the muster-rolle of Satans whole army amount if known? And now tell me, if we are not like to finde our march difficult to heaven, (if ever we mean to go thither) that are to passe through the very quarters of this multitude, who are scattered over the face of all

the earth. When armes are disbanded, and the roads full of debauch't souldiers, wandering up and down; it's dangerous travelling: we here then of murderers and robberies from all quarters. These powers of hell are that party of Angels, who for their mutiny and disobedience were cashier'd heaven, and thrust out of that glorious host; and ever since they have stragled here below, endeavouring to do mischief to the children of men, especially travelling in heavens road.

Fourthly, their unity and order makes their number formidable. We cannot say, here is love among them, that heavenly fire cannot live in a devils bosome, yet there is unity and order as to this, they are all agreed in their designe against God and man: so their unity and consent is knit together by the ligaments, not of love, but of hatred and policy; Hatred against God and his children which they are filled with; and policy, which tells them, that if they agree not in their designe, their Kingdome cannot stand. And how true they are to this wicked brotherhood, our Saviour gives a faire testimony, when he saith, *Satan fights not against Satan*. Did you ever heare of any mutiny in the devils army? or that any of those Apostate Angels did freely yield up one soule to Christ? They are many, and yet but one spirit of wickednesse in them all. *My name*, said the devils, (not our name,) *is legion*. The devil is call'd the *Leviathan*, *Isa. 27. 1. The Lord with his strong sword shall punish Leviathan*, from their cleaving together of *לור* connect or joyned together, used for the Whale, *Job. 4.* whose strength lies in his scales, which are so knit, that he is, as it were, covered with armour. Thus these cur'd spirits do accord in their machinations, and labour to bring their instruments into the same league with them, not contented with their bare obedience, but where they can obtain it do require an expresse oath of their servants to be true to them, as in witches.

Fifthly, the mighty works that are attributed to these evil spirits in Scripture declare their power, and these either respect the elementary, sensible, or intellectual part of the world. The Elementary, what dreadfull effects this Prince of the power of the ayre is able to produce on that, see in the Word; he cannot indeed make the least breath of aire, drop of water, or sparke of fire, but he can, if let loose, (as Reverend Master Caryl saith

on

on *Job* 1.) go to Gods store-houle, and make use of these in such a sort, as no man can stand before him; he can hurl the sea into such a commotion, that the depths shall boil like a pot, and disturb the aire into storms and tempests, as if heaven and earth would meet. *Jobs* children were buried in the ruines of their house by a puffe of his mouth, yea, he can go to Gods magazine, (as the former Author saith) and let off the great ordnance of heaven, causing such dreadfull thunder and lightning, as shall not only affright, but do real execution, and that in a more dreadful way than in the ordinary course of nature. If mans Art can so sublimite nature, as we see in the invention of powder, that hath such a strange force, much more able is he to draw forth its power. Again, over the sensitive world his power is great, not only the beasts, as in the herd of swine, hurried by him into the deep; but over the bodies of men also, as in *Job*; whose sore boils were not the breakings out of a distempered nature, but the print of Satans fangs on his flesh, doing that suddenly, which in nature would have required more time to gather and ripen: & the demoniacks in the Gospel grievously vexed and tormented by him. But this the devil counts small game, his great spite is at the souls of men, which I call the Intellectual world, his cruelty to the body is for the souls sake. As Christs pity to the bodies of men, (when on earth) healing their diseases, was in a subserviency to the good of their souls, bribing them with those mercies suitable to their carnal desires, that they might more willingly receive mercies for their souls, from that hand which was so kind to their bodies, as we give children something that pleaseth them, to perswade them to do something that pleaseth them not, go to school, learn their book: so the devil who is cruel, as Christ is meek, & wisheth good neither to body nor soul, yet shews his cruelty to the body, but on a designe against the soul, knowing well that the soul is soon discomposed by the perturbation of the other, the soul cannot but lightly hear, (& so have its peace & rest broken by the groans & complaints of the body) under whose very roof it dwells; & then it is not strange, if as for want of sleep the tongue talk idly, so the soul should break out into some sinful carriage, which is the bottom of the devils plot on a St. And as for other poor silly souls, he gains little lesse than a God-like fear & dread

of them by that power he putsforth (through divine permission) in liming their goods, beasts and bodies, as among the Indians at this day. Yea, there are many among our selves plainly shew what a throne Satan hath in their hearts upon this account: such, who, as if there were not a God in *Israel*, go for help and cure to his Doctours, wizards I mean. And truly had Satan no other way to work his will on the soules of men, but by this vantage he takes from the body, yet considering the degeneracy of mans state, how low his soule is sunk beneath its primitive extraction, how the body which was a lightsome house, is now become a prison to it, that which was its servant, is now become its Master; it is no wonder he is able to do so much. But besides this, he hath, as a spirit, a nearer way of access to the soule, and as a superiour spirit, yet more over man a lower creature. And above all, having got within the soule by mans fall, he hath now farre more power then before; so that where he meets not resistance from God, he carries all before him. As in the wicked, whom he hath so at his devotion, that he is (in a sense) said to do that in them, which God doth in the Saints. God works effectually in them, *Gal.* 2. 8. *1 Thess.* 2. 13. Satan worketh effectually in the children of disobedience, *Eph.* 2. 2. *ἐνεργῶν* the same word with the former places, he is in a manner as efficacious with them, as the holy Spirit with the other. His delusions strong, *2 Thess.* 2. 11. They return not *re infectâ*. The Spirit *enlightens*, he *blinds* the mindes of those that believe not, *2 Cor.* 4. 4. The Spirit *fills* the Saints, *Ephes.* 5. 18. *Why hath Satan filled thy heart*, saith Peter to Ananias, *Acts* 5. 3? The Spirit *fills with knowledge*, and the fruits of righteousness; Satan fills with envy and all unrighteousnesse. The holy Spirit fills with comfort; Satan the wicked with terrours: As in *Saul*, vexed by an evil spirit; and *Judas*, into whom 'tis said he entered, and when he had satisfied his lust upon him, (as *Amnon* on *Tamar*) shuts the door of mercy upon him, and makes him that was even now Traitour to his Master, Hangman to himselfe. And though Saints be not the proper subjects of his power, yet they are the chief objects of his wrath, his foot stands on the wickeds back, but he wrestles with these, and when God steps aside, he is farre above their match: He hath sent the strongest among them home, trembling and crying to their God, with the

blood running about their consciences. He is mighty, both as a tempter to and for sin, knowing the state of the Christians affairs so well, and able to throw his fire-balls so far into the inward senses, (whether they be of lust or horror,) and to blow up these with such unwearied solicitations, that if they at first meet not with some suitable dispositions in the Christian, at which (as from loose cornes of powder) they may take fire, (which is most ordinary) yet in time he may bring over the creature by the length of the siege, and continued volleys of such motions, to listen to a parley with them, if not a yielding to them. Thus many times he even wearies out the soul with importunity.

SECT. II.

Use I.

First, let this (O man) make the plumes of thy pride fall, whoever thou art that gloriest in thy power; hadst thou more then thou or any of the sons of *Adam* ever had, yet what were all that to the power of these Angels? Is it the strength of thy body thou gloriest in? Alas, what is the strength of frail flesh, to the force of their spiritual nature? thou art no more to these then a childe to a giant, a worm to a man: who could tear up the mountaines, and hurle the world into a confusion, if God would but suffer them. Is it the strength of thy parts above others? doest thou not see what fooles he makes of the wisest among men? winding them about as a Sophister would do an Idiot, making them believe light is dark, bitter is sweet, and sweet bitter, were not the strength of his parts admirable, could he make a rational creature, as man is, so absurdly throw away his scarlet, and embrace dung: I mean, part with God and the glorious happinesse he hath in him, in hope to mend himself, by embracing sin? Yet this he did, when man had his best wits about him in innocency. Is it the power of place and dignity got by warlike atchievement? Grant thou wert able to subdue Nations, and give lawes to the whole world, yet even then without grace from above thou wouldest be his slave. And he himselfe for all this his power, is a cursed spirit, the most miserable of all Gods creatures, and the more, because he hath so much power to do mischief; had the devil lost all his Angelical abilities, when he

he fell, he had gained by his losse. Therefore tremble (O man) at any power thou hast, except thou usest it for God. Art strong in body? who hath thy strength? God, or thy lusts? Some are strong to drink, strong to sin, *Thy bands shall therefore be stronger*, Isa. 28. 22. Hast thou power by thy place to do God and his Church service, but no heart to lay it out for them, but rather against them? thou and the devil shall be tried at the same bar, it seems thou meanest to go to hell for something, thou wilt carry thy full lading thither. No greater plague can befall a man, then power without grace. Such great ones in the world, while here, make a brave shew, like chief Commanders and field-Officers at the head of their Regiments, the common souldiers are poor creatures to them; but when the Army is beaten, and all taken prisoners, then they fling off their scarfe and feather, and would be glad to passe for the meanest in the Army. Happy would devils be, Princes and great ones in the world be, if then they could appear in the habit of some poor sneaks to receive their sentence as such, but then their titles and dignity, and riches shall be read, not for their honour, but further shame and damnation.

Secondly, it shewes the folly of those that think it is such an easie matter to get Heaven. If the devil be so mighty, and heavens way so full of them, then sure it will cost hot water before we display our banners upon the walls of that new *Jerusalem*. Yet it is plain many think otherwise by the provision they make for their march. If you should see a man walking forth without a cloak, or with a very thin one, you will say, Surely he fears no foule weather, or one riding a long journey alone and without armes, you will conclude he expects no thieves on the road. All (if you ask them) will tell you they are on their way to heaven, but how few care for the company of the Saints, as if they needed not their fellowship in their journey? Most go naked, without so much as any thing like armour, have not enough to gaine the name of Professours at large; others, it may be, will shew you some vain flighty hopes on the mercy of God, without any Scripture-bottome for the same, and with these content themselves, which will like a rusty unsound pistol flie in their own face, when they come to use it, and is it any wrong to say these make nothing of getting heaven? Surely these men, (many

of whom thrive so well in the world) never got their estates with so little care as they think to get Heaven. Ask them why they follow their trades so close, they will tell you, estates are not got by sleeping, families are not provided for with the hands in the pocket, they meet with many rooks and cheaters in their dealing, who, should they not look to themselves, would soon undo them: and are there none that thou needest feare will put a cheat on thy soul, and bereave thee of thy crown of glory if they can? thou art blinder then the Prophets servant, if thou feest not more devils encompassing thee, then he saw men about *Samaria*. Thy wordly trade they will not hinder, nay, may be help thee to sinful tricks in that to hinder thee in this: but if once thou resolvest to seek out for Christ and his grace, they will oppose thee to thy face; they are under an oath, as *Pauls* enemies were, to take away the life of thy soul if they can; desperate creatures themselves, who know their doom is irrecoverable, and sell their own lives they will as dear as they can. Now what folly is it to betray thy soule into their hands, when Christ stands by to be thy convoy? out of him thou art a lost creature, thou canst not defend thy self alone against Satan, nor with Satan against God. Close with Christ, and thou art delivered from one of thy enemies, and him the most formidable, God, I mean, yea, he is become thy friend, who will stick close to thee in thy conflict with the other.

Use 3.

Thirdly, to the Saints, be not ye dismayed at this report which the Scripture makes of Satans power. Let them fear him who feare not God. What are these mountaines of power and pride before thee, O Christian, who servest a God that can make a worrne thresh a mountain? the greatest hurt he can do thee, is by nourishing this false feare of him in thy bosome: It is observed (*Bernard saith*) of some beasts in the Forrest, *Plerunque superant leonem ferientem, quæ non sustinent rugientem*: Though they are too hard for the Lion in fight, yet trembles when he roares. Thus the Christian, when he comes to the pinch indeed, is able through Christ to trample Satan under his feet, yet before the conflict stands trembling at the thought of him. Labour therefore to get a right understanding of Satans power, and then this Lion will not appear so fierce, as you paint him in your melancholy fancies. Three considerations will relieve you, when
at

at any time you are beset with the feares of his power.

1 First, it is a derived power; he hath it not in himself, but by patten from another, and that no other but God: *All powers are of him*, whether on earth or in hell. This truth subscribed in faith, would first secure thee (Christian) that Satans power shall never hurt thee. Would thy Father give him a sword to mischief thee his childe? *I have created the Smith* (saith God) *who bloweth the coales, I have created the waster to destroy*, and therefore assures them, *that no weapon formed against them shall prosper*, Isa. 54. 16, &c. If God provides his enemies armes, they shall (I warrant you) be such as will do them little service. When Pilate thought to scare Christ, with what he could do towards the saving or taking away of his life, he replies, *that he could do nothing except it were given him from above*, John 19. 10. as if he had said, Do your worst, I know who seal'd your commission.

1.

Secondly, this considered, would meeken and quiet the soul, when troubled by Satan within, or his instruments without; 'Tis Satan buffets, man persecutes me, but God who gives them both power. *The Lord* (saith David) *bids him curse*. *The Lord* (saith Job) *hath given, and the Lord hath taken*. This kept the Kings peace in both their bosomes. O Christian, look not on the Jailer that whips thee, may be he is cruel, but reade the warrant, who wrote that, and at the bottome thou shalt finde thy Fathers hand.

2.

Secondly, Satans power is limited, and that two ways, he cannot do what he will, and he shall not do what he can.

2.

First he cannot do what he will. His desires are boundlesse, they walk not only to and fro here below, but in Heaven it self, where he is pulling down his once fellow-Angels, knocking down the carved work of that glorious Temple, as with axes and hammers, yea, unthroning God, and setting himself in his place, this foole faith in his heart, There is no God; but he cannot do this, nor many other things which his canker'd malice stirs him up to wish; he is but a creature, and so hath the length of his Tedder to which he is staked, and cannot exceed; and if God be faze, then thou also, for thy life is hid with Christ in God; *If I live* (saith Christ) *you shall live also*. You are engraven on the table of his heart, if he plucks one away, he must the other also.

1.

Again, as he cannot hurt the Being of God, so he cannot pry into the Bosome of God. He knows not *mans*, much lesse the thoughts of God. The Astrologers nor their Master could bring back *Nebuchadnezzars* dream. As men have their closets for their own privacy, where none can enter in but with their Key: so God keeps the heart as his withdrawing room, shut to all besides himself, and therefore when he takes upon him to foretell events: if God teach him not his lesson, nor second causes help him, he is beside his book; so to save his credit, delivers them dubiously, that his text may bear a glosse fuita ble to the effect whatever it is. And when he is bold to tell the state of a person, there is no weight to be laid on his judgement. *Job* was an hypocrite in his mouth, but God proved him a liar. Again, thirdly, he cannot hinder those purposes and counsels of God he knows. He knew Christ was to come in the flesh, and did his worst, but could not hinder his landing, though there were many devices in his heart, yet the counsel of the Lord concerning him did stand, yea, was delivered by the midwifery of Satan suggesting, and his instruments executing his lust as they thought, but fulfilling Gods counsel against themselves. Fourthly, he cannot ravish thy will, *Diabolus non est jussor vitiorum, sed incentor*. He cannot command thee to sin against thy will; he can *motum agere*, make the soule go faster, that is on its way, as the winde carries the tide with more swiftnesse, but he cannot turn the stream of the heart contrary to its own course and tendency.

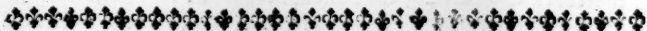
2.

Secondly, Satans power is so limited, that he shall not do what he can. God lets out so much of his wrath as shall praise him, and be as a stream to set his purpose of love to his Saints on work, and then lets down the flood-gate by restraining the residue thereof; God ever takes him off before he can finish his work on a Saint. He can (if God suffers him) rob the Christian of much of his joy, and disturb his peace by his cunning insinuations, but he is under command; he stands like a dog by the Table while the Saints sit at this sweet feast of comfort, but dares not stir to roam off their cheer, his Masters eye is on him. The want of this consideration loseth God his praise, and us our comfort, God having lock't up our comfort in the performance of our duty. Did the Christian consider what Satans power is, and who dams it up;
This

This would alwayes be a Song of praise in his mouth. Hath Satan power to rob and burn, kill and slay, torment the body, distresse the minde? whom may I thank that I am in any of these out of his hands? doth Satan love one better then *Job*? or am I out of fight, or beside his walk? is his courage cool'd, or his wrath appeas'd, that I scape so well? no, none of these, his wrath is not against one, but all the Saints; his eye is on thee, and his arme can reach thee; his spirit is not cow'd, nor his stomach stay'd with those millions he hath devoured, but keen as ever; yea, sharper, because now he sees God ready to take away, and the end of the world drawing on so fast. 'Tis thy God alone whom thou art beholden to for all this, his eye keepeth thee; when Satan finds the *good man* asleep, then he finds our *good God* awake: therefore thou art not consumed, because he changeth not. Did his eye slumber or wander one moment, there would need no other flood to drown thee, yea, the whole world, then what would come out of this dragons mouth.

Thirdly, Satans power is ministerial, appointed by God for the service and benefit of the Saints: 'Tis true (as its said of the proud *Assyrian*) *he weaneth not, so neither doth his heart think so*, but it is in his heart to destroy those he tempts: but no matter what he thinks: as *Luther* comforted himself, when told what had passed at the diet at *Noremburg* against the Protestants, that it was decreed one way there, but otherwise in Heaven; so for the Saints comfort, the thoughts which God thinks to them are peace, while Satans are ruine to their graces, and destruction to their soules; and his counsel shall stand in spite of the devil. The very *mittimus* which God makes, when he commits any of his Saints to the devils prison, runs thus, *Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. so that tempted Saints may say, we had perished if we had not perished to our own thinking. This *Leviathan*, while he thinks to swallow them up, is but sent of God (as the whale to *Jonah*) to waite them safe to land. Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white, Dan. 11. 35. This God intends when he lets his children fall into temptation, as we do with our lippen, the spots they get at our feasts are taken out by washing, rubbing, and laying them out to bleech. The Saints spots are most

most got in peace, plenty and prosperity, and they never recover their whitenesse to such a degree as when they come from under Satans scouring. We do too little, not to feare Satan, we should comfort our selves with the usefulness and subserviency of his temptations to our good. *All things are yours*, who are Christs. He that hath given life to be yours, hath given death also. He that hath given Heaven for your inheritance, *Paul and Cephas*, his Ministers and Ordinances to help you thither; hath given the world with all the afflictions of it, yea, the Prince of it too, with all his wrath and power in order to the same end. This indeed is love and wisdom in a riddle, but you who have the Spirit of Christ can unfold it.



CHAP. V.

Of the time when, the place where, and the subjects whom Satan rules.

Against the Rulers of the darknesse of this world.

THESE words contain the third Branch in the Description of our great enemy the devil; and they hold forth the proper seat of his Empire, with a threefold boundary; he is not *Lord over all*, that is, the incommunicable title of God, but a *Ruler of the darknesse of this world*, where the time, place, and subjects of his Empire are stinted.

1. The time when this Prince hath his rule, *In this world*, that is, now, not hereafter.
2. The place where he rules, *In this world*, that is, here below, not in Heaven.
3. The subjects or persons whom he rules, not all in this lower world neither: and they are wrap't up in these words: *The darknesse of this world*. First, of the first boundary.

SECT.

SECT. I.

The time when he rules: so this word (world) may be taken
 in the text for that little spot of time, which (like an inconsider-
 able parenthesis) is clasp't in on either side with vast eternity;
 call'd sometimes the *present world*. On this stage of time this
 mock-King acts the part of a Prince, but when Christ comes to
 take down this scaffold at the end of this world, then he shall
 be degraded, his crown taken off, his sword broke over his
 head, and he hift off with scorne and shame; yea, of a Prince
 become a close prisoner in hell; no more then shall he infest
 the Saints, no, nor rule the wicked; but he with them, and
 they with him, shall lie under the immediate execution of Gods
 wrath, for this very end Christ hath his Patteut and Commissi-
 on, which he will not give up, *till he shall have put down all rule,* 1 Cor. 15. 24.
 then, and not till then, will he deliver up his Oeconomical King-
 dom to his Father, when he shall have put down all rule; *for*
he must reign till he have put all enemies under his feet. Satan is
 cast already, his doom is past upon him, as Adam: was upon his
 first sin, but full execution is stay'd till the end of the world.
 The devil knows it, it is an Article in his Creed, which made
 him trembling, ask Christ why he came to torment him before his
 time.

First, this brings ill newes to the wicked. Your Prince cannot
 long sit in his throne, sinners at present have a merry time of it,
 if it would hold; they rejoyce, while Christs disciples weep
 and mourne; they ruffle in their silkes, while the Saint
 goes in his rags. Princes are not more careful to oblige
 their Courtiers wit^h pensions and preferments, then the devil
 is to gratifie his followers. He hath his rewards also; *All this*
will I give thee; Am not I able to promote thee, saith Balak to
 Balaam? O'tis strange, (and yet not strange, considering the
 degeneracy of mans nature) to see how Satan carries sinners af-
 ter him with this golden hook. Let him but present such a bait
 as honour, pelfe or pleasure, and their hearts skip after it, as a
 dog would at a crust; he makes them sin for a morsel of bread:
 O the naughty heart of man loves the wages of unrighteousness,
 E e (which

(which the devil promiseth) so dearly, that it fears not the dreadful wages which the great God threatens. As sometimes you shall see a Spaniel so greedy of a bone, that he'll leap into the very river for it, if you throw it thither, and by that time he comes with much ado thither, 'tis sunk, and he gets nothing but a mouth-full of water for his paines. Thus sinners will after their desired pleasures, honours and profits, swimming through the very threatnings of the Word to them, and sometimes they lose even what they gaped for here. Thus *God kept Balaam* (as *Balak* told him) *from honour*, Numb. 24.11. But however they speed here, they are sure to lose themselves everlastingly without repentance. They that are resolved they will have these things, are the men that fall into the devils snare, and are led into those foolish and hurtful lusts, which will drown them in destruction and perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9 O poor sinners! were it not wisdom before you truck with the devil, to enquire what title he can give you to these goodly vanities? will he settle them as a free estate upon you? can he secure your bargain, and keep you from suits of Law? or is he able to put two lives into the purchase, that when you die, you may not be left destitute in another world? Alas, poor wretches! you shall ere long see what a cheat he hath put on you, from whom you are like to have nought but *Caveat emptor*, Let the buyer look to that; yea, this great Prince that is so brag, to tell what he will give you, must down himselfe: and a sad Prince must needs make a sad Court; O what howling will there then be of Satan and his vassals together! O but, saith the sinner, the pleasures and honours sin and Satan offer, are present, and that which Christ Promiseth, we must stay for: This indeed is that which takes most. *Dimas*, saith *Paul*, *forsook me, having loved this present world*, 2 Tim. 4. 10. 'Tis present indeed (sinners); for you cannot say it will be yours the next moment; your present felicity is going, and the Saints (though future) is coming, never to go, and who for a gulpe of portage, and sensual enjoyments at present, would part with a reversion of such a Kingdom? except thou art of his minde, who thought he had nothing, but what he had swallowed down his throat.

Hac habeo qua edi, quaque exacurata libido
— *Hausit.*

which

which *Cicero* could say, was more fit to be writ on an oxes grave then a mans. Vile wretch, that thinkest 'tis not better to deal with God for time, then the devil for ready pay. *Tertullian* wonders at the folly of the *Romanes* ambition, who would endure all manner of hardship in field and fight, for no other thing but to obtain at last the honour to be Consul, which he calls *unus anni volaticum gaudium*, a joy that flies away at the years end. But O what desperate madnesse is it of sinners then, not to endure a little hardship here, but entaile on themselves the eternal wrath of God hereafter, for the short feast, and running banquet their lusts entertain them here withal: which often is not *gaudium unius hore*, a joy that lasts an houre.

Secondly, let this encourage thee, O Christian, in thy conflict with Satan, the skirmish may be sharp, but it cannot be long. Let him tempt thee, and his wicked instruments trounce thee, 'tis but a little while, and thou shalt be rid of both their evil neighbourhoods. The cloud while it drops is rolling over thy head, and then comes faire weather, an eternal Sun-shine of glory. Canst thou not watch with Christ one houre or two? keep the field a few dayes? if yield, thou art undone for ever; persevere but while the battel is over, and thine enemy shall never rally more: bid faith look through the Key-hole of the Promise, and tell thee what it sees there laid up for him that overcomes: bid it listen and tell thee whether it cannot hear the shout of those crowned Saints, as of those that are dividing the spoile, and receiving the reward of all their services and sufferings here on earth: and dost thou stand on the other side, afraid to wet thy foot with those sufferings and temptations, which like a little plash of water, run between thee and glory.

Use 2.

SECT. II.

Secondly, the devils Empire is confined to place as well as time: he is the Ruler of this lower world, not of the heavenly. The highest the devil can go is the aire, call'd the Prince thereof, as being the utmost marches of his Empire, he hath nothing to do with the upper world. Heaven feares no devil, and there-

fore its gates stand alwayes open; never durst this fiend look into that holy place since he was first expell'd, but rangeeth to and fro here below as a vagabond creature, excommunicated the presence of God, doing what mischief he can to Saints in their way to heaven; but is not this matter of great joy, that Satan hath ~~no~~ power there, where the Saints happinesse lies? What hast thou (Christian) which thou needest value, that is not there? Thy Christ is there, and if thou lovest him, thy heart also, which lives in the bosome of its beloved. Thy friends, and kindred in Christ are there, or expected, with whom thou shalt have a merry meeting in thy Fathers house, notwithstanding the snare on *Tabor*, the plots of Satan which lie in the way. O friends, get a title to that Kingdome, and you are above the flight of this Kite. This made *Job* a happy man indeed, who when the devil had plundered him to his skin, and worried him almost out of that too, could then vouch Christ in the face of death and devils, to be his Redeemer, whom he should with those eyes, that now stood full with brinish teares, behold, and that for himself as his own portion. It is sad with him indeed, who is robbed of all he is worth at once, but this can never be said of a Saint. The devil took away *Jobs* purse, (as I may say) which put him into some straits, but he had a God in Heaven that put him into stock again. Some spending money thou hast at present in thy purse, in the activity of thy faith, the evidence of thy son-shipp and comfort flowing from the same enlargement in duty and the like, which Satan may for a time disturb, yea, deprive thee of, but he cannot come to the rolls, to blot thy name out of the book of life; he cannot null thy faith, make void thy relation, dry up thy comfort in the Spring, though dam up the stream; nor hinder thee a happy issue of thy whole war with sinne, though worst thee in a private skirmish; these all are kept in Heaven, among Gods own Crown-Jewels, who is said to keep us by his *power through faith unto salvation.*

SECT. III.

3. The third boundary of the devils Principality is, in regard of his subjects, and they are described here to be the *darknesse of this*

this world, that is, such who are in darknesse. This word is used sometimes to expresse the desolate condition of a creature in some great distresse, *Isa. 50. He that walks in darknesse, and sees no light*; sometimes to expresse the nature of all sin; so *Eph. 5. 1. sin is called the work of darknesse*; sometimes the particular sin of ignorance; often set out by the darknesse of the night, blindnesse of the eye, all these I conceive may be meant, but chiefly the latter; for though Satan makes a foule stir in the soule; that is, in the darkness of sorrow, whether it be from outward crosses, or inward desertions; yet if the creature be not in the darknesse of sin at the same time, though he may disturb his peace as an enemy, yet cannot be said to rule as a Prince. Sin only sets Satan in the Throne; so that I shall take the words in the two latter Interpretations.

First, for the darknesse of sin in general.

Secondly, for the darknesse of ignorance in special; and the sense will be, that the devils rule is over those that are in a state of sin and ignorance, not over those who are sinful or ignorant, so he would take hold of Saints as well as others; but over those who are in a state of sin, which is set out by the abstract, *Ruler of the darknesse*, the more to expresse the fulnesse of the sin and ignorance that possesseth Satans slaves; and the Notes will be two.

First, every soul in a state of sin is under the rule of Satan.

Secondly, ignorance above other sins enslaves a soul to Satan, and therefore all sins are set out by that which chiefly expresseth this, *viz. darknesse*.

Every soule in a state of sin is under the rule of Satan; under which point these two things must be enquired. *Def. 1.*

First, the reason why sin is set out by darknesse.

Second y, how every one in such a state appears to be under the devils rule. For the first,

First, sin may be called darknesse, because the spring and common cause of sin in man is darknesse. The external cause Satan, who is the great promoter of it, he is a cursed spirit, held in chaines of darknesse. The internal is the blindnesse and darknesse of the soule: we may say when any one sins, he doth he knowes not what, as Christ said of his murderers. Did the creature know the true worth of the soul, (which he now sells

for a song) the glorious amiable Nature of God and his holy wayes, the matchlesse love of God in Christ, the poisonful nature of sin, and all these, not by a sudden beam darted into the window at a Sermon, and gone again like a flash of lightening, but by an abiding light; this would spoile the devils market, and poor creatures would not readily take this toad into their bosomes; sin goes in a disguise, and so is welcome.

Secondly, it is darknesse, because it brings darknesse into the soul, and that naturally and judicially.

First, Naturally. There is a noxious quality in sin offensive to the understanding, which is to the soule what the eye and palate are to the body; it discernes of things, and distinguisheth true from false, as the eye white from black: It trieth words as the mouth tasteth meats. Now as there are some things bad for the sight, and others bad for the palate vitiating it, so that it shall not know sweet from bitter; so here sin befots the creature, and makes it injudicious, that he who could see such a practice absurd and base in others before, when once he hath drunk of this enchanting cup himself, (as one that hath foredone his understanding) is mad of it himself, not able now to see the evil of it, or use his reason against it. Thus *Saul* before he had debauch't his conscience, thinks the Witch worthy of death; but after he had trodden his conscience hard with other foule sins, goes to ask counsel of one himself.

Again, sin brings darknesse judicially, such have been threatened, whose eare God hath been trying to open and instruct, and have run out of Gods school into the devils, by *rebelling against light*, that they shall *lie without knowledge*, *Iob* 36.10,12. What should the candle burn waste, when the creature hath more minde to play then work?

Thirdly, Sinne runs into darknesse. Impostors bring in their *dawmable heresies privily*, like those who sell bad ware, loath to come to the Market, where the Standard tries all; but put it off in secret: so in moral wickednesse, sinners like beasts go out in the night for their prey, loth to be seen, afraid to come where they should be found out. Nothing more terrible to sinners then light of truth, *Iohn* 3.19. *because their deeds are evil*. *Felix* was so netled with what *Paul* spake, that he could not sit out the Sermon, but flings away in haste, and adjournes the hearing of *Paul* till

till a convenient season, but he never could finde one. The Sun is not more troublesom in hot Countreys, then truth is to those who sit under the powerful preaching of it; and therefore as those seldome come abroad in the heat of the day, and when they must have their devices over their heads to skreen them from the Sun; so sinners shun as much as may be the preaching of the Word; but if they must go to keep in with their relations, or for other carnal advantages, they, if possible, will keep off the power of truth, either by sleeping the Sermon away, or prating it away with any foolish imagination, which Satan lends to beare them company and chat with them at such a time: or by choosing such a coole Preacher to sit under, whose toothlesse discourse shal rather flater then trouble, rather tickle their fancy, then prick their consciences; and then their fore eyes can look upon the light. *Florescentem amant veritatem, qui non redarguentem*: they dare handle and look on the sword with delight, when in a rich scabbard, who would run away to see it drawn.

Fourthly, Sinne is darknesse for its uncomfortableness, and that in a threefold respect.

First, Darknesse is uncomfortable, as it shuts out of all employment. What could the Egyptians do under the plague of darknesse but sit still? and this to an active spirit is trouble enough. Thus in a state of sin man is an unserviceable creature, he can do his God no service acceptably, spoils every thing he takes in hand, like one running up and down in a shop when windows shut, doth nothing right. It may be writ on the grave of every sinner, who lives and dies in that state. Here lies the man that never did God an houres work in all his life.

Secondly, Darknesse is uncomfortable in point of enjoyment, be there never such rare pictures in the room. if dark, who the better? A soul in a state of sinne may possesse much, but enjoyes nothing: this is a fore evil, and little thought of. One thought of its state of enmity to God, would drop bitterness into every cup, all he hath smells of hell-fire, and a man at a rich feast would enjoy it sure but little, if he smelt fire, ready to burne his house, and himself in it.

Thirdly, Darknesse fills with terrours, feares in the night are most dreadful; a state of sin is a state of fear. Men that owe much, have no quiet, but when they are asleepe, and not then neither,

ther, the cares and fears of the day sink so deep, as makes their rest troublesome and unquiet in the night. The wicked hath no peace, but when his conscience sleeps, and that sleeps but brokenly, awaking often with sick fits of terrour: when he hath most prosperity, he is scared like a flock of birds in a corne-field, at every piece going off. He eats in fear, and drinks in fear; when afflicted, he expects worse behinde, and knows not what this cloud may spread to, and where it may lay him; whether in hell or not, he knows not, and therefore trembles (as one in the dark) not knowing but his next step may be into the pit.

5. Fifthly, sin leads to utter darknesse: utter darknesse is darknesse to the utmost. Sin in its full height, and wrath in its full heat together; both universal, both eternal. Here's some mixture, peace and trouble, pain and ease: sin and thoughts of repenting, sin and hopes of pardon: there the fire of wrath shall burn without slackings, and sin run parallel with torment; hell-birds are no changelings; their torment makes them sin, and their sin feeds their torment, both unquenchable, one being fuel to another.

2. Secondly, let us see how it appears, that such as are under a state of sinne, are under the rule of Satan. Sinners are call'd the children of the devil, 1 *John* 3. 10. and who rules the childe, but the Father? they are slaves; who rules the slave, but the Master? they are the very mansion-house of the devil; where hath a man command, but in his own house? *I will go to my house*, Mat. 12. 44. As if the devil had said, I have walk't among the Saints of God, to and fro, knocking at this door and that, and none will bid me welcome, I can finde no rest; well, I know where I may be bold; I'll even go to my own house, and there I am sure to rule the roite without controul; and *when he comes, he findes it empty, swept and garnished*; that is, all ready for his entertainment. Servants make the house trim and handsome against their Master comes home, especially when he brings guests with him, as here the devil brings *seven more*. Look to the sinner, there is nothing he is or hath, but the devil hath dominion over it: *He rules the whole man*, their mindes blinding them. All the sinners apprehension of things are shaped by Satan: he looks on sin with the devils spectacles: he reads the Word with the devils comment: he sees nothing in its na-
tive

tive colours, but is under a continual delusion. The very wisdom of a wicked man is said to be devillish, *James 3. 15. Saurvidius*, or *devil-like*, because taught by the devil, and also such as the devils is, *wise only to do evil. He commands their Wills*, though not to force them, yet effectually to draw them. *His work* (saith Christ) *ye will do.* You are resolved on your way, the devil hath got your hearts, and him you will obey; and therefore when Christ comes to recover his throne, he finds the soule in an uproare, as *Ephesus* at *Pauls* Sermon, crying him down, and *Diana* up. We will not have this man reign over us, what is the Almighty that we should serve him? *He rules over all their members*, they are call'd *weapons of unrighteousnesse*, all at the devils service; as all the armes of a Kingdome, to defend the Prince against any that shall invade. The head to plot, the hand to act, the feet swift to carry the body up and down about his service; *He rules over all he hath.* Let God come in a poor member, and beseech him to lend him a penny, or bestow a morsel to refresh his craving bowels; and the covetous wretch his hand of charity is withered, that he cannot stretch it forth; but let Satan call, and his purse flies open and heart also. *Nabal* that could not spare a few fragments for *David* and his followers, this churle could make a feast like a Prince, to satiate his own lust of gluttony and drunkennesse. *He commands their time*, when God calls to duty, to pray, to hear, no time all the week to be spared for that; but if the sinner hears there is a merry meeting, a knot of good fellows at the Alehouse; all is thrown aside to wait on his Lord and Master, Calling left at six and sevens; yea, wife and children crying, (may be starving) while the wretch is pouring out their very blood, (in wasting their livelihood) at the foot of his lust. The sinner is in the bond of iniquity, and being bound he must obey. He is said to go after his lust, *as the foole to the stocks, Prov. 7. 22.* The pinion'd Malefactor can as soon untie his owne armes and legs, and so run from his Keeper, as he from his lusts. *They are servants*, and their members instruments of sin: even as the Workman takes up his axe and it resists not; so doth Satan dispose of them, except God saith nay.

See here the deplored condition of every one in a state of sin. *Use.* He is under the rule of Satan, and government of hell. What
 Ff tongue:

tongue can utter, what heart can conceive the misery of this state? It was a dismal day which Christ foretold, *Mat. 24.* When the abomination of desolation should be seen, standing in the Holy place; then (saith Christ) let him that is in Judea flee into the mountains. But what was that to this? they were but men, though abominable; these devils. They did but stand in the material Temple, & defile and deface that: but these display their banners in the souls of men, pollute that throne, which is more glorious then the material heaven it self, made for God alone to sit in. They exercised their cruelties at furthest on the bodies of men, killing and torturing them; here the precious souls of men are destroyed. When David would curse to purpose the enemies of God, he prays, that *Satan may be at their right hand.* 'Tis strange sinners should no more tremble at this, who, should they see but their swine, or a beast bewitch't and posselt of the devil run headlong into the sea, would cry out as half undone: and is not one soul more worth then all these? what a plague is it to have Satan possess thy heart and spirir, hurrying thee in the fury of thy lusts to perdition? O poor man! what a sad change hast thou made? Thou who wouldst not sit under the meek and peaceful Government of God thy rightful Lord, art paid for thy rebellion against him, in the cruelty of this Tyrant who writes all his Laws in the blood of his subjects, and why will you sit any longer, (O sinners) under the shadow of this *Bramble*, from whom you can expect nothing but eternal fire, to come at last and devour you? Behold, Christ is in the field, sent of God to recover his right, and your liberty. His royal Standard is pitch't in the Gospel, and Proclamation made, that if any poor sinners, weary of the devils Government, and heavy laden with the miserable chaines of his spiritual bondage, (so as these irons of his sins enter into his very soule to afflict it with the sense of them) shall thus come, and repair to Christ: he shall have protection from Gods justice, the devils wrath, and sins dominion; In a word, *he shall have rest*, and that *glorious*. Usually when a people have been ground with the oppression of some bloody Tyrant, they are apt enough to long for a change, and to listen to any overture that gives them hope of liberty, though reached by the hand of a stranger, who may prove as bad as the other, yet bondage is so grievous, that people desire to change, (as sick

Mat. 11. 28.
1st. 11. 10.

sick men their beds) though they finde little ease thereby. Why then should deliverance be unwelcome to you sinners? Deliverance brought not by a stranger whom you need feare, what his design is upon you; but your near Kinsman in blood, who cannot mean you ill, but he must first hate his own flesh; and who ever did that? To be sure not he, who though he took part of our flesh, that he might have the right of being our Redeemer: yet would have no kindred with us in the sinfulness of our nature. And 'tis sin that makes us cruel, yea, to our own flesh. What can you expect from him but pure mercy, who is himself pure? They are *the mercies of the wicked which are cruel*. Believe it (Sirs) Christ counts it his honour, that he is a King of a willing people, and not of slaves. He comes to make you free, not to bring you into bondage, to make you Kings, not vassals. None give Christ an evil word, but those who never were his subjects. Enquire but of those who have tried both Satans service and Christs; they are best able to resolve you what they are. You see when a soul comes over from Satans quarters unto Christ, and has but once the experience of that sweetness which is in his service, there is no getting him back to his old drudgery, as they say of those who come out of the North, (which is cold and poor) they like the warme South so well, they seldom or never go back more. What more dreadful to a gracious soule, then to be delivered into the hands of Satan? or fall under the power of his lusts? It would choose rather to leap into a burning furnace, then be commanded by them. This is the great request a childe of God makes, that he would rather whip him in his house, then turne him out of it to become a prey to Satan. O sinners, did you know (which you cannot till you come over to Christ, and embrace him as your Lord & Saviour) what the priviledges of Christs servants are, & what gentle usage Saints have at Christs hands, you would say those were the only happy men in the world, which stand continually before him. His Lawes are writ, not with his subjects blood (as Satans are) but with his own. All his commands are acts of grace; 'tis a favour to be employed about them. To you 'tis given to believe, yea, to *suffer*. Such an honour the Saints esteem it to do any thing he commands, *Phil. 1:29.* that they count God rewards them for one piece of service, if he enables them for another. *This I had (saith David) because I*

Hcb. 11. 3.

kept thy Precepts, Psal. 119. 56. what was the great reward he got? See, v. 55. *I have remembered thy Name, O Lord, in the night, and kept thy Law*; then follows, *This I had*: He got more strength, and skill to keep the Law for the future, by his obedience past, and was he not well paid (think you) for his pains? *There's fruit even in holinesse*, the Christian hath in hand, which he eats while he is at work, that may stay his stomach until the full reward comes, which is *eternal life*, Rom. 6. 22. Jesus Christ is a Prince that loves to see his people thrive, and grow rich under his Government. This is he whom sinners are so afraid of, that when he sets open their prison, and bids them come forth, they choose rather to bore their ears to the devils post, then enjoy this blessed liberty. It is no wonder that some of the Saints have (indeed) *when tortured, not accepted deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection*. But what a riddle is this, that forlorne soules bound with the chaines of their lusts, and the irresistable decree of God for their damnation, (if they beleeve not on the Lord Jesus) should, as they are driving to execution, refuse deliverance? This may set eaven and earth on wondring. Surely, dying in their sins, they cannot hope for a better Resurrection then they have a death. I am afraid rather, that they do not firrly beleeve they shall have any Resurrection; and then no wonder they make so light of Christs offer, who think themselves safe, when once earth't in this Burrow of the grave. But let sinners know, 'tis not the grave can hold them, when the day of Assize comes, and the Judge calls for the prisoners to the bar. The grave was never intended to be a Sanctuary, to defend sinners from the hand of justice, but a close Prison to secure them against the day of srial, that they may be forth-coming. Then sinners shall be digg'd out of their burroughs, and dragg'd out of their holes to answer their contempt of Christ and his grace. O how will you be astonish't, to see him become your Judge, whom you now refuse to be your King? to heare that Gospel witnessse against you for your damnation, which at the same time shall acquit others for their salvation? what think you to do, sinners, in that day? wilt thou cry and shream for mercy at Christs hands? Alas, when the sentence is past, thy face will immediately be covered: condemned prisoners are not allowed to speake: teares then

then are unprofitable, when no place left for repentance, either in Christs heart or thine own. Or meanest thou to apply thy self to thy old Lord, in whose service thou hast undone thy soule, and cry to him, as she to *Ahab*, Help, O King: Alas, thine eye shall see him in the same condemnation with thy selfe. Hadst thou not better now renounce the devils rule, while thou mayest be received into Christs Government? poure out thy tears and cries now for mercy and grace when they are to be had, then to save them for another world to no purpose?

But possibly thou wilt say, *How may I that am a home-borne slave to sin, yea, who have lived so many yeares under his cursed rule, get out of his dominion and power, and be translated into the Kingdom of Christ?* *Quest.*

The difficulty of this great work lies not in prevailing with Christ, to receive thee for his subject, who refuseth none that in truth of heart desire to come under his shadow. It doth not stand with his designe to reject any such. Do Physicians use to chide their Patients away? Lawyers their Clients? or Generals discourage those who fall off from the enemy, and come to their side? surely no. When *David* was in the field, 'tis said, *1 Sam. 22.2.* Every one that was in distresse, in debt, or in discontent gathered themselves to him, and he became a Captain over them. And so will Christ be to every one that is truly discontented with Satans Government, and upon an inward dislike thereof repairs to him. But the maine buinesse will be to take thee off from thy engagements to thy lusts and Satan, till which be done, Christ will not own thee as a subject, but look on thee as a Spy. It fares with sinners as with servants. There may be fallings out between them and their Masters, and high words passe between them, that you would think they would take up their pack and be gone in all haste: but the fray is soon over, and by next morning all is forgot, and their servants are as hard at their work as ever. O how oft are sinners taking their leave of their lusts, and giving warning to their old Masters, they will repent and reform, and what not? but in a few dayes they have repented of their repentance, and deformed their reformings, which shewes they were drunk with some passion, when they thought or spake this; and no wonder they reverse all when they come to their true temper. Now because Satan has many policies, by which

he useth to keep his hold of sinners; I shall discover some of them, which if thou canst withstand, it will be no hard matter to bring thee out of his power and rule.

I.

First, Satan doth his utmost, that sinners may not have any serious thoughts of the miserable state they are in, while under his rule; or heare any thing from others, which might the least unsettle their mindes from his service. Consideration (he knows) is the first step to repentance: He that doth not consider his wayes what they are, and whither they lead him, is not like to change them in haste. *Israel* stirr'd not, while *Moses* came, and had some discourse with them about their woful slavery, and the gracious thoughts of God towards them; and then they begin to desire to be gone. *Pharaoh* soon bethought him what consequence might follow upon this, and cunningly labours to prevent by doubling their task: *Ye are idle, ye are idle, therefore ye say, Let us go, and do sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore and work,* *Exod. 5. 17, 18.* As if he had said, Have you so much spare time to think of gadding into the wilderness, and have you your seditious Conventicles, (*c Moses* and you) to lay your plots together? I'll break the knot, give them more work, scatter them all over the land to gather straw, that they may not meet to entice one anothers hearts from my service. Thus Satan is very jealous of the sinner, afraid every Christian that speaks to him, or Ordinance he hears should inveigle him. By his good-will he should come at neither, no, nor have a thought of heaven or hell from one end of the week to the other, and that he may have as few as may be, he keeps him full-handed with work. The sinner grindes, and he is filling the Hopper, that the Mill may not stand still. He is with the sinner as soon as he wakes, and fills his wretched heart with some wicked thoughts, which as a morning draught may keep him from the infection of any favour of good, that may be breathed on him by others in the day-time. All the day-long he watcheth him, as the Master would do his man, that he fears will run away. And at night he like a careful Jayler locks him up again in his chamber with more bolts and fetters upon him, not suffering him to sleep as he lies on his bed, *till he hath done some mischief.* Ah, poor wretch! was ever slave so look't to? as long as the devil can keep thee thus, thou art his own sure enough. The Prodigal came to him-
self,

self, before he came to his Father. He considered with himself what a starving condition he was in; his huskes were poor meat, and yet he had not enough of them neither, and how easily he might mend his commons, if he had but grace to go home and humble himself to his Father. Now and not till now he goes: Resolve thus poor sinner, to sit down and consider what thy state is, and what it might be, if thou wouldest but change the bondage of Satan for the sweet Government of Jesus Christ. First, ask thy soule, whether the devil can, after thou hast worne out thy miserable life here in his drudg'ry, prefer thee to a happy state in the other world; or so much as secure thee from a state of torment and wo? If he cannot, whether there be not one *Jesus Christ*, who is able and willing to do it? and if so, whether it be not bloody cruelty to thy precious soule, to stay any longer under the shadow of this bramble, when thou mayest make so blessed a change? A few of these thoughts abidingly laid home to thy soule, (may God striking in with them) shake the foundations of the devils prison, and make thee haste as fast from him, as one out of a house on fire about his eares.

zly, Satan hath his instruments to oppose the messengers and overtures, which God sends by them to bring the sinner out of Satans rule. When *Moses* comes to deliver *Israel* out of the *Egyptian* bondage, up start *Jannes* and *Jambres* to resist him. When *Paul* preacheth to the *Deputy*, the devil hath his Chaplain at Court to hinder him: *Elymas*, one that was full of all subtilty and mischief. Some or other (to be sure) he will finde, when God is parlying with a sinner, and perswading him to come over to Christ, that shall labour to clog the work. Either carnal friends, these he sends to plead his cause, or old companions in wickednesse, these bestir them, one while labouring to jeer him out of his new way, or if that take not, by turning their old love into bitter wrath against him for playing the Apostate, and leaving him so. Or if yet he will not be stopt in his way, then he hath his daubing Preachers (still like *Jobs* messengers the last the worst) who with their soul-flattering, or rather murdering doctrine shall go about to heal his wound slightly. Now as ever you desire to get out of Satans bondage, have a care of all these, harden thy self against the entreaties of carnal friends and relations. Resolve, that if thy children should hang about thy knees

knees to keep thee from Christ, thou wilt throw them away. If thy father and mother should lie prostrate at thy foot, rather then not go to Christ, to go over their very backs to him. Never can we part with their love upon such advantageous terms as these. And for thy brethren in iniquity, I hope thou dost not mean to stay while thou hast their good will, then even ask the devils also. Heaven is but little worth if thou hast not a heart to despise a little shame, and beare a few frumps from prophane *Ishmaels* for thy hopes of it. Let them spit on thy face, Christ will wipe it off; let them laugh, so thou winnest. If they follow not thy example before they die, the shame will be their own; God himself shall spit it on their face before men and Angels, and then kick them into hell. And lastly, 'scape but the snare of those flatterers, who use their tongues only to lick sinners consciences whole with their *placenta's* soothing doctrine, and thou art faire for a Christ; ask not counsel of them, they may go about to give you ease. but all those stiches, with which they sow up thy wounds, must be ripp't open, or thou diest for it.

3.

Thirdly, Satan labours to while off the sinner with delays. Floating, sitting thoughts of repenting he feares not, he can give sinners leave to talk what they will do; so he can beg time, and by his Art keep such thoughts from coming to a head, and ripening into a present resolution; few are in hell but thought of repenting; but Satan so handled the matter, that they could never pitch upon the time in earnest when to do it. If ever thou meanest to get out of his clutches, flie out of his doors, and run for thy life, where ever this warning findes thee, stay not, though in the midst of thy joyes, with which thy lusts entertain thee: As the paper which came to *Brentius*, (from that Senatour his dear friend) took him at supper with his wife and children, and bade him flee *cito, citius, citissime*; which he did, leaving his dear company and sweet chear; so do thou, or else thou mayest repent thy stay, when 'tis too late. A vision charged the *wise men* to go back another way, and not so much as see *Herod*, though he had charged them otherwise. O go not back, drunkard, to thy good fellows; adulterer to thy Queanes; covetous wretch, to thy usury and unlawful gain: turne another way, and gratifie not the devil a moment. The command saith, now repent

pent; the Imperative hath no future tense. God saith, *To day, while it is to day*: The devil saith, *To morrow*; which wilt thou obey, God or him? Thou sayest, thou meanest at last to do it, then why not now? Wilt thou stand with God for a day or two, huckle with him for a penny? Heaven is not such a hard penniworth, but thou mayest come up to his termes: And which is the morrow thou meanest? thou hast but a day in thy life for ought thou knowest, where then canst thou finde a morrow for repentance? but shouldest thou have as many dayes to come as *Methusalah* lived, yet know, sin is hereditary, and such sort of diseases grow more upon us with our years. 'Tis with long accustomed sinners, as with those who have sate long under a Government, they rather like to be as they are, (though but ill on it) then think of a change, or like those who in a journey, have gone out of their way all the day, will rather take any new way, over hedge and ditch, then think of going so far back to be set right.

Fourthly, Satan labours to comprmise the businesse, and bring it to a composition between him and Christ: when conscience will not be pacified, then Satan for quiets sake will yield to something, as *Pharaoh* with *Moses*: after much ado he is willing they should go, *Exod. 8. 28.* And *Pharaoh* said, *I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness.* But then comes in his caution, *only you shall not go very farre away.* Thus Satan will yield the sinner may pray, and hear the Word, and make a goodly Profession, so he doth not go very far, but that he may have him again at night. If God hath the mattins, he looks for the vigils, and thus he is content the day should be divided. Doth conscience presse a reformation and change of the sinners course, rather then faile, he'll grant that also: yet as *Pharaoh*, when he yielded they should go, he meant *their little ones should stay behinde as a pledge for those that went*, *Ex. 10. 11.* So Satan must have some one sin that must be spared, and no matter though it be a little one. Now if ever you would get out of the devils rule, make no composition with him. Christ will be King or no King. Not a hoof must be left behinde, or any thing which may make an errand for thee afterwards to return. Take therefore thy everlasting farewell of every sin, as to

the sincere and fixt purpose of thy heart, or thou doest nothing. *Paul* joynes his faith and his purpose together, *2 Tim.* 3.10. not the one without the other. At the promulgation of the Law in *Sinai*, God did, as it were, give *Israel* the oath of Allegiance to him; then he told them what law he would rule them by, and they gave their consent: this was the *espousal* which God puts them in minde of, *Jerem.* 2. in which they were solemnly married together, as King and subjects. Now mark, before God would do this, he will have them out of *Egypt*. They could not obey his Lawes, and *Pharaoh's* idolatrous customes also, and therefore he will have them out, before he solemnly espouseth them to be a Nation peculiarly his. Thou must be a widow before Christ marry thee, he will not lie by the side of anothers wife. O that it were come to this! then the match would soon be made between Christ and thee. Let me ask thee, poor soul, hast thou seriously considered who Christ is, and what his sweet Government is? and couldest thou finde in thy heart (out of an inward abhorrency of sin and Satan, and a liking to Christ) to renounce sin and Satan, and choose Christ for thy Lord? Doth thy soule say, as *Rebecca*, *I will go*, if I could tell how to get to him. But alas, I am here a poore prisoner, I cannot shake off my fetters, and set my self at liberty to come unto Christ. Well, poor soul, canst thou groane heartily under thy bondage? then for thy comfort know, thy deliverance is at the door; he that heard the cry of *Israel* in *Egypt*, will hear thine also, yea, come and save thee out of the hands of thy lusts. He will not, as some, who entangle thy affections, by making love to thee. and then give over the suit, and come at thee no more, If Christ has won thy heart, he'll be true to thee, and be at all the cost to bring thee out of thy prison-house also, yea, take the paines to come for thee himselfe, and bring with him those wedding-garments, in which he will carry thee from thy prison to his Fathers house with joy, where thou shalt live, not only as a subject under his Law, but as a Bride in the bosome of his love, and what can be added to thy happiness more? when thy Prince is thy husband, and that such a Prince to whom all other are vassals, even the Prince of the world himself; and yet so gracious, that his Majesty hinders not his familiar converse with thee a poor creature, but addes to

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the condescendent thereof, therefore God chooseth to mixe names of greatnesse and relation together; the one to sweeten the other: *Thy Maker is thy Husband, thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall be called, Isa. 54.5.* And to usher in those promises with titles of greatest dread and terror to the creature, that hold forth the greatest condescensions of love; How can God stoop lower then to come and dwell with a poor humble soul? which is more, then if he had said such a one should dwell with him, for a beggar to live at Court is not so much as the King to dwell with him in this cottage. Yet this Promise is usher'd in with the most magnificent titles; *Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabits eternity, whose Name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, Isa. 57.15.* and why such titles? but to take away the feares which his Saints are prone to take up from them. Will the high and lofty One (saith the humble soule) look on me a poor worme? will the Holy God come near such an unclean creature, (saith the contrite one?) *Isaiah* himself cried he was undone at the sight of God, and this attribute proclaim'd before him, *Isa. 6.* Now God prefixeth these, that the creature may know his Majesty and holinesse, which seems so terrible to us, are no prejudice to his love; yea, so gracious a Prince is thy husband, that he delights rather his Saints should call him by names of love then state. *Thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt no more call me Baali, Hof. 2. 16.* that is, my Husband, not my Lord.

SECT. IV.

The second point followes. Ignorance above other sins enslaves a soule to Satan, a knowing man may be his slave, but an ignorant one can be no other. Knowledge doth not make the heart good, but it is impossible that without knowledge it should be good. There are some sins which an ignorant person cannot commit, there are more which he cannot but commit: Knowledge is the Key, *Luke 11.52.* Christ the door, *John 15.* Christ opens Heaven. Knowledge opens Christ. In three particulars the Point will appear more fully.

G g 2.

First,

Doct. 2.

First, ignorance opens a door for sin to enter.

Secondly, as ignorance lets in sin, so it locks it up in the soul, and the soul in it.

Thirdly, as it locks it up, so it shuts all meanes of help out.

1.

First, ignorance opens the door for Satan to enter in with his troops of lusts; where the watch is blinde, the City is soon taken: an ignorant man sins, and like drunken *Lot*, he knowes not when the tempter comes, nor when he goes: he is like a man that walks in his sleep, knowes not where he is, nor what he does. *Father, forgive them*, (said Christ) *they know not what they do*. The Apostle, *1 Cor. 15.* having reproved the sensuality of some, *verse 32.* who made the consideration of death, by which others are awed from sin, a provocative to sinne, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die*, he gives an account of this absurd reasoning; *All have not the knowledge of God*. An ignorant person is a man in shape, and a beast in heart. *There is no knowledge in the land*, saith the Prophet, *Hosea 4.2.* and see what a regiment follows this blinde Captain, swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and what not? We reade, *2 Tim. 3.3.* of some *laden with sins*; here are trees full of bitter fruit, and what dung shall we finde at the root, that makes them so fruitfull, but ignorance? *silly women*, and such *who never come to the knowledge of the truth*.

2.

Secondly, ignorance as it lets sin in, so it locks it up, and the soul in it, such a one lies in Satans inner dungeon, where no light of conviction comes, darknesse inclines to sleep, a blinde minde and a drowisie conscience go together. When the storme arose, the mariners who were awake fell a praying to their God, but the sleeper feares nothing, Ignorance lays the soul asleepe under the hatches of stupidity. God hath planted in the beast a natural feare of that which threatens hurt to it. Go to thrust a beast into a pit, and it hangs back, nature shews its abhorrency. Man being of a nobler nature, and subject to more dangers, God hath set a double guard on him, as a natural feare of danger, so a natural shame that covers the face at the doing of any unworthy action. Now an ignorant man hath slipt from both these his Keepers: he sins and blusheth not, because he knows not his guilt: he wants that Magistrate within, which should put him to shame: neither is he afraid, because he knows not his danger, and

and therefore he playes with his sin, as the childe with the waves, that by and by will swallow him up. Conscience is Gods alarm to call the sinner up; It doth not alwayes ring in his eare that hath knowledge, being usually set by God to go off at some special houre; when God is speaking in an Ordinance, or striking in a Providence; but in an ignorant soule, this is silent. The Clock cannot go when the weights are taken off: Conscience is only a witnesse to what it knows.

Thirdly, ignorance shuts out the meanes of recovery. Friends and Ministers yea Christ himself stands without, and cannot help the creature, as such threatenings and promises, all of no use; he feares not the one, he desires not the other, because he knowes neither: Heaven-way cannot be found in the dark, and therefore the first thing God doth, is to spring in with a light, and let the creature know where he is, and what the way is to get out of his prison-house, without which all attempts to escape are in vain. There is some shimmering light in all, *Non dantur pure tenebre*, I think, is good Divinity as well as Philosophy; and this night-light may discover many sins, produce inward prickings of conscience for them, yea, stir up the creature to step aside, rather then drown in such broad waters. There are some sins so cruel and costly, that the most prostrate soul may in time be weary of their service for low ends: but what will all this come to, if the creature be not acquainted with Christ the true way to God, faith and repentance the only way to Christ? such a one after all this bustle, in stead of making an escape from Satan, will run full into his mouth another way. There are some wayes which at first seem right to the traveller, yet winde about so insensibly, that when a man hath gone far, and thinks himself near home, he is carried back to the place from whence he set forth. This will befall every soul ignorant of Christ, and the way of life through him; after many yeares travel, as they think, towards heaven by their good meanings, blinde devotions and reformation, when they shall expect to be within sight of heaven, they shall finde themselves even where they were at first, as very slaves to Satan as ever.

This speaks to you that are Parents, see what need you have of instructing your children, and training them up betimes in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Till these

Use I.

chaines of darknesse be knock't off their mindes, there is no possibility of getting them out of the devils prison; he hath no such tame slave as the ignorant soul: such a one goes before Satan (as the silly sheep before the butcher) and knowes not who he is, nor whether he carries him; and can you see the devil driving your children to the shambles, and not labour to rescue them out of his hands? Bloody parents you are, that can thus harden your bowels against your own flesh. Now the more to provoke you to your duty, take these considerations.

1. Your relation obligeth you to take care of their precious soules. 'Tis the soul is the child rather then the body: and therefore in Scripture put for the whole man. *Abraham and Lot went forth with all the soules they had gotten in Haran, Gen. 12. so, All the soules that came with Jacob into Egypt,* that is, all the persons. The body is but the sheath; and if one should leave his sword with you to be kept safely for him, would you throw away the blade, and only preserve the scabbard? And yet Parents do commonly judge of their care and love to their children by their providing for the outward man, by their breeding, that teaching them how to live like men (as they say) when they are dead and gone, and comport themselves to their civil place and rank in the world. These things indeed are commendable, but is not the most weighty businesse of all forgotten in the mean time, while no endeavour is used that they may live as Christians, and know how to carry themselves in duty to God and man as such? and can they do this without the knowledge of the holy rule they are to walk by? I am sure David knew no means effectual without this, and therefore propounds the question, *Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way?* and he resolves it in the next words, *By taking heed thereto according to thy Word, Psal. 119.9.* And how shall they compare their way and the Word together, if not instructed? our children are not borne with Bibles in their heads or hearts. And who ought to be the Instructor, if not the Parent, yea, who will do it with such natural affection? As I have heard sometimes a mother say in other respects, Who can take such pains with my childe, and be so careful as my self, that am its Mother? Bloody parents then they are who acquaint not their children

children with God or his Word; what do they but put them under a necessity of perishing, if God stirre not up some to shew more mercy then themselves to them? Is it any wonder to hear that ship to be sunk, or dash't upon the rock, which was put to sea without card or compasse? no more is it, they should ingulph themselves in sin and perdition, that are thrust forth into the world (which is a sea of temptation) without the knowledge of God or their duty to him. In the fear of God think of it Parents: your children have soules, and these God set you to watch over; It will be a poor account at the last day, if you can only say, Lord, here are my children, I bred them compleat Gentlemen, left them rich and wealthy. The rust of that silver you left them will witnesse your folly and sinne, that you would do so much for that which rusts, and nothing for the enriching their mindes with the knowledge of God, which would have enlured for ever; happy if you had left them lesse money and more knowledge.

2. Consider it hath ever been the Saints practice to instruct and teach their children the way of God. *David* we finde dropping instruction into his sonne *Solomon*, 1 Chron. 28. 9. *Know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing minde.* Though a King, he did nor put it off to his Chaplains, but whetted it on him with his own lips. Neither was his *Queen Bathsheba* forgetful of her duty, her gracious counsel is upon record, *Prov* 31. and that she may do it with the more seriousnesse and solemnity, we finde her stirring up her motherly bowels, to let her sonne see, that she fetch't her words deep, even from her heart. *What my son! and what the sonne of my wombe! and what the sonne of my vows?* Ver. 2. Indeed that counsel is most like to go to the heart, which comes from thence. Parents know not what impression such melting expressions of their love mingled with their instructions leave on their children. God bids draw forth our soules to the hungry, that is more then draw our purse, which may be done, and the heart hard and churlish. Thus we should draw forth our soules with our instructions. What need I tell of *Timothy's* Mother and Grandmother, who acquainted him with the Scripture from his youth? And truly I think, that man calls in question his own Saintship, that takes no care to acquaint his child

ehilde with God, and the way that leads to him. I have known some, that though prophane themselvs, have been very solicitous, their children should have good education; but never knew I a Saint that was regardlesse whether his childe knew God or not.

3. It is an act of great unrighteousnesse not to instruct our children. We read of some *that hold the truth in unrighteousnesse*: among others, those Parents do it, that lock up the knowledge of these saving truths from their children, which God hath imparted to themselves. There is a double unrighteousness in it.

First, they are unrighteous to their children, who may lay as much claime to their care of instructing them, as to their labour and indultry in laying up a temporal estate for them. If he should do unrighteously with his childe, that should not endeavour to provide for his outward maintenance, or having gathered an estate, should lock it up, and deny his childe necessities, then much more he that lives in ignorance of God, whereby he renders himself incapable of providing for his childe's soul; but most of all, he that having gather'd a stock of knowledge, yet hides it from his childe.

Secondly, they are unrighteous to God.

First, in that they keep that talent in their own hands which was given to be paid out to their children. When God reveal'd himself to *Abraham*, he had respect to *Abraham's* children, and therefore we finde God promising himself this at *Abraham's* hands, upon which he imparts his minde to him concerning his purpose of destroying *Sodom*; *Shall I hide from Abraham* (saith God) *that thing which I do? I know that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the w. y of the Lord.* Gen. 18. 17, 19. The Church began at first in a family, and was preserv'd by the godly care of Parents in instructing their children and household in the truths of God, whereby the knowledge of God was transmitted from generation to generation; and though now the Church is not confined to such strait limits, yet every private family is as a little nursery to the Church; if the nursery be not carefully planted, the Orchard will soon decay. O could you be willing, Christians, that your children when you are laid in the dust, should be turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine; and

and prove a generation that do not know God? Atheism needs not be planted, you do enough to make your children such, if you do not endeavour to plant Religion in their mindes. The very neglect of the Gardener to sow and dresse his Garden, gives advantage enough to the weeds to come up. This is the difference between Religion and Atheisme, Religion doth not grow without planting, but will die even where it is planted without watering. Atheism, irreligion and profanenesse are weeds will grow without setting, but they will not die without plucking up, all care and meanes little enough to stub them up. And therefore you that are Parents, and do not teach your children, deal the more unrighteously with God, because you neglect the best season in their whole life for planting in them the knowledge of God, and plucking up the contrary weeds of Atheisme and Irreligion. Young weeds come up with most ease, simple ignorance in youth becomes wilful ignorance, yea, impudence in age. you will not instruct them when young, and they will scorne their Ministers should when they are old.

Secondly, you deal unrighteously with God, that traine not up your children in the knowledge of God, because your children, if you be Christian Parents, are Gods children; they stand in a federal relation to him, which the children of others do not; and shall Gods children be nurtured with the devils education? Ignorance is that which he blindes the mindes of the children of disobedience withal. Shall Gods children have no better breeding? The children of a Jew God made account were borne to him; *Thy sons and daughters whom thou hast borne to me*, Ezek. 16. 20. God had by the Covenant, which he made with that people, married them unto himself, and therefore as the wife bears her children to her husband, (they are his children,) so God calls the children of the Jews his, and complains of it as an horrible wickednesse in them, that they should not bring them up as his, but offer them up to *Molech*, *They have slain my children*, (saith God) v. 21. And are not the children of a Christian his children, as well as the Jewes were? hath God recall'd or altered the first Covenant, and cut off the entaile; and darest thou slay not only thy children, but the Lords also? and is not ignorance that bloody knife that doth it?

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, Hosea 4. 6. Do you not tremble to offer them not to *Molech*, but the devil, whom before you had given up to God, when you brought them to that solemn Ordinance of Baptism, and there desired before God and man that they might become Covenant-servants to the Lord? and hast thou bound them to him, and never teach them, either who their Lord and Master is, or what their duty is as his servants? of thy own mouth God will condemn thee.

4. - Fourthly, consider you who are Parents, that by not instructing your children, you entitle your selves to all the sins they shall commit to their death. We may sin by a proxy, and make anothers fact our own. *Thou hast* (saith God by *Nathan* to *David* concerning *Uriah*) *slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon,* 2Sam. 12. 9. So thou mayest pierce Christ and slay him over and over with the bloody sword of thy wicked children. If thou beest not the more careful to train them up in the feare of God: There might be something said for that Hea-then, who when the Scholar abused him, fell upon the Master and struck him. Indeed 'tis possible he might be in the most fault. When the childe breaks the Sabbath, it is his sin; but more the fathers, if he never taught him what the command of God was. And if the Parent be accessary to the sinne of the childe, it will be hard for him to escape a Partnership, yea, a precedence in the punishment. O what a sad greeting will such have of their children at the great day! will they not then accuse you to be the murderers of their precious soules, and lay their blood at your door, cursing you to your face that taught them no better? But grant that by the interposition of thy timely repentance, thou securest thy soule from the judgement of that day; yet God can scourge thee here for the neglect of thy duty to them. How oft do we see children become heavy crosses to such Parents? It is just that they should not know their duty to thee, who didst not teach them their duty to God; or if thou shouldest not live so long to see this, yet sure thou canst not but go in sorrow to thy grave, to leave children behind thee that are on their way to hell. Some think, that *Lots* lingering so long in *Sodom*, was his loathnesse to leave his sons in law behind him, to perish in the flames. No doubt (good man) it was.

was very grievous to him, and this might make him stay pleading with them, till the Angel pull'd him away. And certainly nothing makes holy Parents more loath to be gone out of this Sodomitical world, then a desire to see their children out of the reach of that fire (before they go) that God will rain upon the heads of sinners. You know not how soon the messenger may come to pluck you hence; do your best while you are among them to win them home to God.

To the Ministers of the Gospel. Let this stir up your bowels of compassion towards those many ignorant soules in your respective Congregations, who know not the right hand from the left. This, this is the great destroyer of the Countrey, which Ministers should come forth against with all their care and strength. More are swept to hell with this plague of spiritual darknesse then any other. Where the light of knowledge and conviction is, there commonly is a sense and pain that accompanies the sinner when he doth evil, which forceth some now and then to enquire for a Physician, and come in the distresse of their spirits to their Minister or others for counsel, but the ignorant soul feels no such smart; if the Minister stay till he sends for him to instruct him, he may sooner hear the bell go for him, then any messenger come for him; you must seek them out, and not expect that they will come to you. These are a sort of people that are afraid more of their remedy, then their disease, and study more to hide their ignorance, then how they may have it cured, which should make us pity them the more, because they can pity themselves so little. I confesse, it is no small unhappinesse to some of us, who have to do with a multitude, that we have neither time nor strength to make our addresses to every particular person in our Congregations, and attend on them as their needs require, and yet cannot well satisfie our consciences otherwise. But let us look to it, that though we cannot do to the height of what we would, we be not found wanting in what we may. Let not the difficulty of our Province make us like some, who when they see they have more work upon their hands then they can well dispatch, grow sick of it, and sit down out of a lazy despondency, and do just nothing. He that hath a great house running to ruine, and but a small purse; 'tis better for him to repair now a little, and then a little,

Use 2.

then let all fall down, because he cannot do it all at once. Many Ministers may complain of their Predecessours, that they left them their people more out of repair then their houses, and this makes the work great indeed. As the Jewes, who were to revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, before they could build the wall, yet it went up, because *the people had a minde to work*, Nehem. 4. O if once our hearts were but fill'd with zeal for God, and compassion to our peoples soules, we would up and be doing, though we could but lay a brick a day, and God would be with us. May be you who finde a people rude and sottishly ignorant, like stones in the quarry, and trees unfell'd, shall not bring the work to such perfection in your dayes as you desire; yet as *David* did for *Solomon*, thou mayest by thy paines in teaching and instructing them, prepare materials for another who shall rear the Temple. It's very ordinary for one Minister to enter into the labours of another; to reap those by a work of Conversion, in whom a former Minister hath cast the seed of knowledge and conviction. And when God comes to reckon with his Workmen, the Plowman and Sower shall have his penny, as well as the Harvest-man and Reaper. O its a blessed thing to be, (as *Job* saith he was) eyes to the blinde, much more to blinde soules; such are the Ministers, God himself calls *Pastours* after his own heart, that feed his people with knowledge and understanding, Jer. 3.15. But wo to those that are accessary to their peoples ignorance. Now a Minister may be accessary to the ignorance of his people.

2.

First, by his own ignorance. Knowledge is so fundamental to the work and calling of a Minister, that he cannot be one without it. *Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of thy God, I will also forget thy children*, Hof. 4. 6. The want of knowledge in a Minister is such a defect, as cannot be supplied by any thing else; be he never so meek, patient, bountiful, unblameable, if he hath not skill to divide the Word aright, he is not cut out for a Minister. Every thing is good, as its good for the end it is appointed to; a knife, though it had a haft of diamonds, yet if it will not cut, 'tis no knife. A bell, if not sound, is no bell. The great work of a Minister is to teach others, his lips are to preserve knowledge, he should be as

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conversant in the things of God, as others in their particular trades. Ministers are called Lights, if the light then be darknesse, how great is the darknesse of that people like to be? I know these stars in Christs hands, are not all of the same magnitude; there is a greater glory of gifts and graces shines in some then others; yet so much light is necessary to every Minister, as was in the star the wise men saw at Christs birth, to be able out of the Word to direct sinners the safe and true way to Christ and salvation. O Sirs, it is a sad way of getting a living by killing of men, as some unskilful Physicians do; but much more to get a temporal livelihood by ruining soules through our ignorance. He is a cruel man to the poor Passengers, who will undertake to be Pilot, when he never so much as karn't his Com-passe

Secondly, by his negligence. Its all one if the Nurse hath no milk in her breasts, or having, drawes it not forth to her child. There is a wo to the *Idol-shepherd*, Zech. 11. such as have mouthes, but speak not; lips, but not to feed the people with knowledge. It shall be the peoples sinne, if they feed not when bread is before them, but wo to us if we give them not meat in due season. O Sirs, what shall we say to our Lord that trusts us, if those abilities which he hath given us as market-money to buy bread for our people, be found wrap't up in a napkin of sloth? if that time wherein we should have been teaching and instructing them, shall appear to be wasted in our pleasures, or employed about our carnal profits. That servant shall have but a sad welcome of his Master when he comes home, that shall be found out of the way with the Key, and the family starving in mean time for want of provision.

Thirdly, by his unedifying preaching, when he preacheth unsound doctrine, which doth not perfect the understanding, but corrupt it. Better he did leave them in simple ignorance, then colour their mindes with a false die; or when that he preacheth is frothy and flashy, no more fit to feed their soules, then husks the Prodigals belly, which when they know they are little the wiser for their soules good. Or when his discourses are so high flown, that the poor people stand gazing, as those who have lost the sight of their Preacher, and at the end of the Sermon cannot tell what he would have. Or those who preach only truths,

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that :

that are for the higher forme of Professours, who have their senses well exercised, excellent may be for the building up three or foure eminent Saints in the Congregation; but in the mean time, the weak ones in the family, (who should indeed chiefly be thought on, because least able to guide themselves, or carve for themselves, these are forgotten. He sure is an unwise builder, that makes a Scaffold as high as *Pauls* steeple, when his work is at the bottom, and he is to lay the foundation, whereas the Scaffold should rise as the building goes up. So *Paul* advanceth in his doctrine, as his hearers do in knowledge; *Heb.* 6. 1. *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection. Let us.* It is well indeed when the people can keep pace with the Preacher. To preach truths and notions above the hearers capacity, is like a Nurse, that should go to feed the childe with a spoon too big to go into its mouth. We may by such preaching please our selves, and some of higher attainments, but what shall poor ignorant ones do in the mean time. He is the faithful Steward that considers both. The Preacher is (as *Paul* saith of himself) *a debtor both to the Greek, and to the Barbarian, to the wise and to the unwise,* *Rom.* 1. 14. to prepare truths suitable to the degree of his hearers. Let the wise have their portion, but let them be patient to see the weaker in the family served also.

4.

Fourthly, a Minister may be accessary to the ignorance of his people, when through the scandal of his life he prejudiceth his doctrine, as a Cook, who by his nastinesse makes others afraid to eat what comes out of his foule fingers Or when through his supercilious carriage, his poor people dare not come to him. He that will do any good in the Ministers calling, must be as careful as the Fisher, that he doth nothing to scare souls away from him, but all to allure and invite, that they may be toll'd within the compasse of his net.

r Use 3.

Is the ignorant soul such a slave to Satan? Let this stirre you up that are ignorant from your seats of sloth, whereon like the blinde Egyptians you sit in darknesse, speedily come out of this darknesse, or resolve to go down to utter darknesse. The covering of *Hamans* face did tell him, that he should not stay in the Kings preface. If thou livest in ignorance, it shews thou art
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in Gods black bill ; he puts this cover before their eyes in wrath, whom he means to turn off into hell, *2 Cor. 4. If our Gospel be hid, it is to thofe that perifh.* In one place finners are threatned, *they fhall die without knowledge* ; in another place, *they fhall die in their fins*, John 8. He indeed that dies without knowledge, dies in his fins : and what more fearful doom can the great God paffe upon a creature then this ? better die in a prifon, die in a ditch, then die in ones fins. If thou die in thy fins, thou fhalt rife in thy fins, as thou fallest afleep in the duft, fo thou awakeft in the morning of the Refurrection ; if an ignorant Chriftlefle wretch, as fuch thou fhalt be arraigned and judged. That God whom now finners bid depart from them, will then be worth their acquaintance (themselves being Judges,) but alas ! then he will throw their own words in their teeth, and bid them depart from him, he defires not the knowledge of them. O finners, you fhall fee at laft, God can better be without your company in heaven, then you could without his knowledge on earth : Yet, yet 'tis day, draw your Curtains, and behold Chrift fhining upon your face with Gospel-light ; here wifdom crying in the ftreets, and Chrift piping under your window in the voice of his Spirit and Meffengers, *How long will ye fimple ones love fimplicity, and fools hate knowledge ? Turne you at my reproof ; behold, I will poure out my Spirit unto you, and make known my words unto you.* What can you fay (finners) for your fottifh ignorance ? Where is your cloak for this finne ? the time hath been when the Word of the Lord was precious, and there was no open vifion, not a Bible to be found in Town or Countrey ; when the tree of knowledge was forbidden fruit, and none might tafte thereof without licence from the Pope ; happy he that could get a leaf or two of the Testament into a corner, afraid to tell the wife of his bofome. O how fweet were thefe waters, when they were forced to fteal them ? but you have the Word, or may in your houfes, you have thofe that open them every Sabbath in your Affemblies, many of you at leaft have the offers of your Minifters to take any paines with you in private, paffionately befeeching you to pity your fouls, and receive instruction : yea, 'tis the lamentation they generally take up, you will not come unto them that you may receive light. How long may a poor Minifter fit in his ftudy, before any of the ignorant fort will come.

Job 36.

Prov. 1. 21, 22, 23.

come upon such an errand? Lawyers have their Clients, and Physicians their Patients: these are sought after, and call'd up at midnight for counsel: but alas! the soule, which is more worth than raiment and body too, that is neglected, and the Minister seldom thought on, till both these be sent away. Perhaps when the Physician gives them over for dead, then we must come and close up those eyes with comfort, which were never opened to see Christ in his truth, or be counted cruel, because we will not sprinkle them with this holy water, and anoint them for the Kingdome of Heaven, though they know not a step of the way which leads to it. Ah, poor wretches! what comfort would you have us speak to those, to whom God himself speaks terror? Is heaven ours to give to whom we please? or is it in our power to alter the Lawes of the most High, and save those whom he condemns? Do you not remember the curse that is to fall upon his head, *that maketh the blinde to wander out of the way?* Deut. 27. 18. What curse then would be our portion, if we should confirme such blinde souls, that are quite out of the way to heaven, encouraging you to go on and expect to reach heaven at last, when God knowes your feet stand in those paths that lead to eternal death? No, 'tis written, we cannot, and God will not reverse it; you may reade your very names among those damned soules which Christ comes in flaming fire to take vengeance on, who the Apostle tells us are such, *that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 2 Thes. 1. 8. And therefore in the feare of God, let this provoke you, of what age or sexe, rank or condition soever in the world, to labour for the saving knowledge of God in Christ, *whom to know is life eternal.* *Are you young?* Enquire after God betimes, while your parts are fresh, and memory strong, before the throng of worldly cares divert you, or lusts of youth debauch you. The feet of those lusts which have buried millions of others in perdition, stand ready to carry you the same way, if preventing grace come not and deliver you out of their hands, by seasoning your mindes with the knowledge of God. This mornings draught may prevent thy being infected with the ill savours thou mayest receive from the corrupt examples of others. Nay, how long thy stay may be in the world thou knowest not, see whether thou canst not finde graves of thy length in
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the burial place; and if thou shouldest die ignorant of God and his Law, what would then become of thee? The small brush and the old logs, young sinners, and those that are withered with age meet and burn together. Or if thou shouldest stay a while longer here, may be because thou wilt not learn now, God will not teach thee then. Or if thou shouldest in thy old age get acquaintance with God, yet 'tis sad to be sowing thy seed, when thou shouldest be reaping thy sheaves, learning to know God, when thou mightest be comforting thy self from the old acquaintance thou hast enjoyed with him. *Are you old and ignorant?* Alas, poor creatures! your life in the socket, and this candle of the Lord, not set up and lighted in your understanding? your body bowing to the dust, and nature toling the passing bell, as it were, and you (like one going into the dark) know not whither death will lead you or leave you. 'Tis like the infirmities of age, make you wish your bones were even laid at rest in the grave: but if you should die in this condition, your poor soules would even wish they were here again with their old burdens on their back, aches and diseases of old age are grievous, but damned soules would thank God, if he would blesse them with such a heaven, as to lie in these pains to escape the torments of the other: O bethink you before you go hence, the lesse time you have, the more diligence you must use to gain knowledge, we need not be earnest (one would think) to bid the poor prisoner learne his book, that cannot reade, when he knows he shall be hang'd if he read not his neck-verse. 'Tis not indeed the bare knowing the truths of the Gospel, saves; but the grosse ignorance of them to be sure will damn soules. *Are you poor?* It is not your poverty is your sin or misery, but your ignorance where the true treasure lies. Were you Gods poor, rich in knowledge and faith, you were happy, *Eccles. 4. 13.* *Better is a poor and wise child, than a foolish King, who will no more be admonisht;* yea, so happy, that did the Princes of the world understand themselves aright, they would wish themselves in your clothes, how ragged soever they are, rather then be in their own robes; there are better making for you in heaven which you shall put on, when theirs shall be pull'd off to their shame: It will not then trouble you that you were, while in the world, poor; but it will torment them that they were so rich and

great, and so poor to God and beggarly in their souls.

Are you rich? Labour for the knowledge of the most High. Solomon had more of the worlds treasure then a thousand of you have, and yet we finde him hard at prayer, tugging with God for knowledge, 1 Chron. 1. 10. All these outward enjoyments are but *vagine bonorum*, as afflictions are *vagine malorum*. I am afraid many men think themselves priviledged by their worldly greatnesse from this duty, as if God were bound to save them because rich. Alas, Sirs, there are not so many of you like to come there. I must confesse, it would make one tremble to think what a small number those among the great ones that shall be saved, are summed up into. *Not many great, not many rich;* Why so few saved? Because so few have saving knowledge. O the Atheisme, the ignorance, the sottish barbarisme that is to be found even in those that the world applaud, and even worship because of their lands and estates, who yet are not able to give any account of their faith? A poor leather-coat Christian will shame and catechize a hundred of them. If heaven were to be purchased with house and lands, then these would carry it away from the poor disciples of Jesus Christ, they have their hundreds and thousands lie by them for a purchase alwayes, but this money is not currant in Heavens Exchange. *This is life eternal, to know thee, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

But how may an ignorant soule attain to knowledge?

First, Be deeply affected with the ignorance. Some are blind, as *Laodicea*, and know it not, Rev. 3. 17. As ignorance blinds the minde, so pride is a blinde before their ignorance, that they know it not. These have such a high opinion of themselves, that they take it ill any should suspect them as such; these of all men are most out of the way to knowledge, they are too good to learne of man as they think, and too bad to be taught of God. The gate into Christs School is low, and these cannot stoop: The Master himselfe is so humble and lowly, that he will not teach a proud Scholar. Therefore first become a fool in thy own eye. A wiser man then thy self hath confessed as much, Prov. 30. 2, 3. *I am more brutish then any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy.* When thou art come to thy self to own and blush at the brutish ignorance of thy minde, thou art fit to be

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be admitted into Christs School. *If they be ashamed, then shew them the patterne of the house,* Ezek. 43. 10.

Secondly, be faithful with that little knowledge thou hast. Art thou convinced this is a sinne, and that is a duty? Follow the light close, you know not what this little may grow to; We use to set up our children with a little stock at first, and as they use it, so we adde. The Kingdom of God comes of small beginnings. God complains of *Israel*, they were *brutish in their knowledge*, Jer. 10. 14. He doth not say, brutish in their ignorance, had they sinned because they did not know better, this would have excused *à ranro*, but they did that which was brutish and unreasonable, as their worshipping graven images notwithstanding they knew to the contrary. That man shall not excel in knowledge, who prostitutes it to sinne, *Job* 36. 12. *If they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and shall die without knowledge.* A candle pent up close in a dark Lanthorn, swailes out apace: and so doth light shut up in the conscience, and not suffered to come forth in the conversation. Those Heathens that are charged for *holding the truth in unrighteousnesse*, Rom. 1. 18. the next news you hear of them is, *that they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened*, ver. 21.

Thirdly, ply the Throne of grace. *Bene orasse est bene studuisse*; he is the best Student in divinity, that studies most upon his knees. Knowledge is a divine gift, all light is from Heaven. God is the Father of light, and prayer puts the soul under the pupillage of God. *If any one lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.* This is more then naked knowledge, wisdom how to use it. Study may make one a great Scholar in the Scriptures, but prayer makes a wise Christian, as it obtains sanctified knowledge, without which it is no perfect gift, but *dōper à dōver*, a gift and no gift. Pray then with an humble boldnesse, God gives it to all that ask, and that *à dōver*, candidly, liberally, not like proud man who will rather put one to shame, who is weak for his ignorance, then take the paines to teach him. Thy Petition is very pleasing to God. Remember how *Solomon* sped upon the like occasion, and promise thy self the same successe. Christs School is a free School; he denies none that come to him, so they will submit to the orders of the School,

School; and though all have not an answer in the same degree of knowledge (it is not needful that all should be *Solomons* in knowledge, except all were to be *Solomons* in place) yet the meanest disciple, that Christ sends forth, shall be furnished with saving knowledge, enough to fit him for his admittance into heavens Academy. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after bring me to glory.*

Fourthly, thou must bestow some time for thy diligent search after truth. Truth lies deep, and must be digged for. Since man was turned out of Paradise, he can do nothing without labour, except sinne (this follows his hand indeed) but this treasure of knowledge calls for Spade and Mattock. We are bid, *Search the Scripture*, and *Dan. 12. 4. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*; a Metaphor from Merchants, who bestir themselves to get an estate, run to and fro, first in one land, then in another, wherever they heare of any thing to be got, thither they post, though to the ends of the earth: Thus must the soul run from one duty to another, one while reade, and anon meditate of what he hath read, then pray over his meditations, and ask counsel after all. What is the meaning of this, and how understand you that? *Non schola Epicuri fecit magnos viros, sed contubernium.* There is more light got sometimes by a short conference with the Preacher, then by his whole Sermon. Be sure thou compasse all the meanes for knowledge within the walk of thy endeavour. In this thy search for knowledge observe three things.

1.

First, the end thou proposest, that it be pure and holy, not meerly to know, as some do, who labour for knowledge, as many for estates, and when they have got it look on their notions, as they on their bags of money, but have not a heart to use their knowledge for their own or others good; this is a fore evil. Speculative knowledge like *Rachel* is faire; but barren. Not to be known and admired by others for thy stature in knowledge above thy Brethren, verily it is too base an end to aime at, in seeking knowledge, especially such as is the knowledge of God and Christ. To see a Heathen study for knowledge in Philosophy, and then carry all his labor to this market, and think himself rewarded with obtaining the name for a wise man; is, though base, yet more tolerable: but for one that knows God, and

and what it is to enjoy him, for such a one to content himself with a blast or two of sorry mans vain breath, this is folly with a witnesse, look thou fliest higher in thy end then so. Labour for knowledge, that thou mayest feare God whom thou knowest. Thus *David*, *Psal.* 119. 33 *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.* The Word of God is called a light unto our feet, not to our tongues meerly to talk of, but feet to walk by, endeavour for it, not that thou mayst spread thy own name, but celebrate Gods. As *David* promisseth, when he understands the Precepts of God, then he will talk of his wondrous works, he will trumpet the fame of them, and thereby awaken others to enquire after God.

Secondly, when thy end is right set, then thou must be constant in thy endeavour after it. The mysteries of Christ are not learn't in a day. *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord*, *Hof.* 6. 3. Some are in a good mood (may be) and they will look into the Bible, and reade a chapter or two, and away they go for a week, & never practise it more, like some boys, if at school one day, truant all the week after: is it any wonder such thrive not in knowledge? It is a good speech of *Bernard*, *Tantum distat studium à lectione, quantum amicitia ab hospitio, socialis affectio à fornicata salutatione.* The study of the Word, and the reading of it differs as much, as the friendship of such who every day converse lovingly together, doth from the acquaintance one hath with a stranger at an Inn, or whom he salutes as he passeth by in the street. If you will get knowledge indeed, you must not only salute the Word now and then, but walk with it, and enter into daily converse with it. The three men (who were indeed Angels) that stood by *Abraham*, as he sat at his Tent-door, were reserved, and strange, till *Abraham* invited them into his Tent, and entertain'd them friendly; and then Christ who was one among them (as appears by the name *Jehovah*, given him in several verses, and also by what he promised he would do for *Sarah*, ver. 10. not what God would do, which if a created Angel, he would) begins to discover himself to *Abraham*, and reveale his secrets to him. That soul above others shall be acquainted with the secrets of God in his Word, that doth not slightly reade the Word, and as it were complement with it, at his tent-doore,

but desires more intimacy with it, and therefore entertaines it within his soul by frequent meditating of it. *David* compares the Word for sweetnesse to *the honey and the honey-comb*. Indeed it is so full, that at first reading some sweetnesse will now and then drop from it, but he that doth not presse it by meditation, leaves the most behinde.

3. Thirdly, Be sure thou takest the right order and method. Arts and Sciences have their rudiments, and also their more abstruse and deep notions; and sure the right end to begin at, is first to learn the principles: he (we say) is not like to make a good Scholar in the University, that never was good Grammar-Scholar. And they cannot be solid Christians, that are not instructed in the grounds of Christianity. The want of this is the cause why many are so unstedfast. First, of this way and then of that, blown like glasses into any shape, as false Teachers please to breath. Alas, they have no center to draw their lines from; think it no disgrace you who have runne into errour, and lost your selves in the Labyrinths of deep points (which now are the great discourse of the weakest Professors) to be set back to learn the first principles of the Oracles of God better; too many are, as *Tertullian* saith in another case, *Pudoris magis memores quam salutis*, more tender of their reputation then their salvation, who are more ashamed to be thought ignorant, then careful to have it cured.

4. Fourthly, if thou wouldest attain to divine knowledge, wait on the Ministry of the Word. As for those who neglect this, and come not where the Word is preach't, they do like one that should turne his back on the Sunne that he may see it; if thou wouldest know God, come where he hath appointed thee to learn. Indeed, where the meanes is not, God hath extraordinary wayes, as a father, if no School in town, will teach his childe at home, but if there be a publike School, thither he sends him: *God maketh manifest* (saith *Paul*) *the savour of his knowledge by us in every place*, 2 Cor. 2. 14. Let men talk of the Spirit what they please. He will at last be found a quencher of the Spirit, that is, a despiser of Prophecy; they both stand close together, 1 *Thef.* 5. 19. 20. *Quench not the Spirit, Despise not prophesying*. But it is not enough, to sit under the meanes: woful experience teacheth us this, there are some no Sun will tan, they keep their old com-

complexion under the most shining and burning light of the Word preached, as ignorant and prophane as those that never saw Gospel-day, and therefore if thou wilt receive any spiritual advantage by the Word, take heed how thou hearest.

First, Look thou beest a wakeful hearer. Is it any wonder he should go away from the Sermon no wiser then he came, that sleeps the greatest part of it away, or heares betwixt sleeping and waking? It must be in a dream sure, if God reveals any thing of his mind to him. So indeed God did to the Fathers of old, but it was not as they prophanely slept under an Ordinance. O take heed of such irreverence. He that composeth himself to sleep (as some do) at such a time, or he that is not humbled for it, and that deeply; both of them betray a base and low esteem they have of the Ordinance. Surely thou thinkest but meanly of what is delivered, if it will not keep thee awake, yea, of God Himselfe, whose message it is. See how thou art reproved by the awful carriage of a Heathen, and that a King. *Ehud* did but say to *Eglen*, *I have a message from God unto thee, And he arose out of his seat, Judg. 3. 20.* And thou clapest down on thy seat to sleep; O how darest thou put such an affront upon the great God? How oft did you fall asleep at dinner, or telling your money? And is not the Word of God worth more then these? I should wonder if such Sermon-sleepers do dream of any thing but hell-fire. 'Tis dangerous you know to fall asleep with a candle burning by our side; some have been so, burnt in their beds, but more dangerous to sleep while the candle of the Word is shining so near us. What if you should sink down dead like *Entychus*? here is no *Paul* to raise you as he had; and that you shall not, where is your security?

Secondly, Thou must be an attentive hearer. He that is awake, but wanders with his eye or heart, what doth he but sleep with his eyes open? It were as good the servant should be asleep in his bed, as when up, not to minde his Masters businesse. When God intends a soul good by the Word, he draws forth a one to listen and hearken heedfully to what is delivered; as we see in *Lydia*, who ('tis said) attended unto the things which were spoken of *Paul*. And those *Luke 9. 48.* The people were attentive to hear him. They did hang on him as you shall see Bees on some sweet flower, or as young birds on the bills of their dammes,

dammes as they feed them; that is, the soul which shall get light and life by the Word. *Hear ye children, and attend to know understanding*, Prov. 4. 1. Labour therefore in hearing the Word to fixe thy quick-silver minde, and set thy self to hear, as 'tis said *Jehoshaphat* did to pray; and that thou mayest, before thou goest, get thy heart into some deep sense of thy spiritual wants, especially of thy ignorance of the things of God, and thy deplored condition by reason of it, till the heart be touch't, the minde will not be fixt. Therefore you may observe, 'tis said, *God opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended*, Acts 16. 14. The Minde goes of the Wills errand; we spend our thoughts upon what our hearts propose. If the heart hath no sense of its ignorance, or no desires after God, no wonder such a one listens not what the Preacher saith; his heart sends his mind another way. *They sit before me as my people* (saith God) *but their heart goeth after their covetousnesse*; They do not come out of such an intent or desire to hear for any good to their soules, then they would apply themselves wholly to the work; no, it is their covetousnesse hath their hearts; and therefore as some idle servant, when he hath waited on his Master, brought him to his pew, then he goes out to his good fellowes at the Alehouse, and comes no more till Sermon be almost done: so do the thoughts of most when they go to the Ordinance, they slip out in the street, market or shop, you may finde them any where but about the duty before them, and all because these have their hearts more then God and his Word.

Thirdly, thou must be a retentive hearer, without this the work will ever be to begin again. Truths to a forgetful hearer are as a seale set on water, the impression lasts no longer then the seale is on; the Sermon once done, and all is undone, be therefore very careful to fasten what thou hearest on thy memory, which that thou mayest do,

- I. First, receive the truth in the love of it. An affectionate hearer will not be a forgetful hearer. Love helps the memory, *Can a woman forget a childe, or a maid her ornaments, or a bride her attire?* No, they love them too well, Were the truths of God thus precious to thee, thou wouldest with *David*, think of them day and night. Even when the Christian, through weaknesse of memory cannot remember the very words
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he hears, to repeat them : yet then he keeps the power and favour of them in his spirit ; as when sugar is dissolved in wine, you cannot see it, but you may taste it ; when meat is eaten and digested, it is not to be found as it was received, but the man is cheered and strengthened by it, more able to walk and work then before, by which you may know it is not lost ; so you may taste the truths the Christian heard in his spirit see them in his life. Perhaps if you ask him what the particulars were the Minister had about faith, mortification, repentance, and the like, he cannot tell you ; yet this you may finde, his heart is more broken for sin, more enabled to rely on the promises, and now weaned from the world. As that good woman answered one, that coming from Sermon, ask't her what she remembred of the Sermon? said, she could not at present recal much, but she heard that which should make her reform some things as soon as she came home.

Secondly, meditate on what thou hearest ; by this *David* got more wisdom then his teachers. Observe what truth, what Scripture is cleared to thee in the Sermon more then before, take some time in secret to converse with it, and make it thereby familiar to thy understanding. Meditation to the Sermon is, what the harrow is to the seed, it covers those truths, which else might have been pickt or wash't away. I am afraid there are many proofs turned down at a Sermon, that are hardly turned up, and lookt on any more, when the Sermon is done: and if so, you make others believe you are greater traders for your souls, then you are indeed ; as if one should come to a shop and lay by a great deal of rich ware, and when he hath done goes away, and never calls for it. O take heed of such doings. The hypocrite cheats himself worst at last.

Thirdly, discharge thy memory of what is sinful. We wipe our Table-book, and deface what is there scribbled, before we can write new. There is such a contrariety betwixt the truths of God, and all that is frothy and sinful, that one puts out the other; if you would retain the one, you must let the other go.



CHAP. VI.

*Of the spirituality of the devils nature, and their extreme wickednesse.**Against spiritual wickednesse.*

THese words are the fourth branch in the Description, *Spiritual wickednesse*, and our contest or combate with them as such, exprest by the adverbative particle [*Against*] in the Greek, *καὶ τὰ πνευματικὰ ἁμαρτίας*, word for word; *Against the Spirituals of wickednesse*, which is, say some, *against wicked spirits*; that is true; but not all. I conceive with many Interpreters, not only the spiritual nature of the devil, and the wickednesse thereof to be intended, but also, yea, chiefly the nature and kinde of those sins, which these wicked spirits do most usually and vigorously provoke the Saints unto, and they are the spirituals of wickednesse, not those grosse fleshy finnes, which the herd of beastly sinners, like swine, wallow in; but fin spirituellized; and this, because it is not *τὸ ἐν σάρτι* but *πνευματικόν*, not spirits, but spirituals. The words present us with these three doctrinal Conclusions.

1. First, the devils are spirits.
2. Secondly, the devils are spirits extremely wicked.
3. Thirdly, these wicked spirits do chiefly annoy the Saints with, and provoke them to spiritual wickednesse. First, of the first.

SECT. I.

1. First, they are spirits. Spirit is a word of various acception in Scripture. Amongst others used often to set forth the essence and nature of Angels, good and evil, both which are called spirits,

rits. The holy Angels, *Heb. 1. 14. Are they not all ministring spirits?* The evil: *There came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will perswade him,* 1 Kings 22. 21. that spirit was a devil. How oft is the devil call'd the unclean spirit, foule spirit, lying spirit, &c. Sin did not alter their substance, for then, as one saith well, that nature and substance which transgress could not be punish't.

First, the devil is a spirit, that is, his essence is immaterial and simple, not compounded (as corporal beings are) of matter and forme: *Handle and see me,* (saith Christ to his disciples, that thought they had seen a Spirit) *a Spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have,* Luke 24. 39. If they were not thus immaterial, how could they enter into bodies and possess them, as the Scripture tells us they have, even a legion into one man? *Luke 8. 30. one body cannot thus enter into another.*

Secondly, the devils are spiritual substances, not qualities, or evil motions, arising from us, as some have absurdly conceived. So the Sadduces, and others following them deny any such being, as Angel, good or evil: but this is so fond a conceit, that we must both forfeit our reason, and deny the Scriptures to maintain it, where we finde their Creation related, *Col. 1. 18,* the fall of some from their first estate. *Jude 6.* and the standing of others called the elect Angels; The happinesse of the one, who behold Gods face, and their employment, are sent out to attend on the Saints, as servants on their Masters heires, *Heb. 1.* The misery of the other, reserved in chains of darknesse unto the judgement of the great day, and their present work, which is to do mischief to the foules and bodies of men, as far as they are permitted; all which shew their subsistence plain enough. But so immerst is sorry man in flesh, that he will not easily beleieve what he sees not with his fleshly eyes; upon the same account we may deny the Being of God himself, because invisible.

Thirdly, they are entire spiritual substances, which have every one proper existence: and thus they are distinguish't from the souls of men, which are made to subsist in a humane body: and together with it to make one perfect man: so that the soul, though when separated from the body, it doth exist, yet hath a tendency to union with its body again.

Fourthly, they are, though entire, spiritual substances, yet finite, being but creatures. God only is the uncreated, infinite, and absolutely simple Spirit, yea, Father of all other spirits.

Now from this spiritual nature of the devil, we may further see what a dreadful enemy we have to grapple with.

1. First, as spirits, they are of vast intellectual abilities. Sorry man, while in this dark prison of the body, hath not light enough to know what Angelical perfections are; that they excel in knowledge all other creatures we know, because as Spirits they come nearest by Creation to the Nature of God that made them; the heavens are not lift higher from the earth, then Angels by knowledge from man, while on earth. Man by Art hath learn't to take the height of the stars of heaven, but where is he that can tell how far in knowledge Angels exceed man? 'Tis true, they have lost much of that knowledge they had, even all their knowledge, as holy Angels, what now they know of God hath lost its savour, and they have no power to use it for their own good. What *Jude* saith of wicked men, may be said of them; *What they know naturally in these things they corrupt themselves.* They know the holiness of God, but love him not for it, as the Elect Angels do, and themselves by Creation did. They know the evil of sin, and love it not the lesse, but though they are such fools for themselves, yet have subtilty too much for all the Saints on earth, if we had not a God to play our game for us.

2. Secondly, as spirits, they are invisible, and their approaches also. They come and you see not your enemy. Indeed this makes him so little feared by the ignorant world, whereas it is his greatest advantage, if rightly weighed. O, if men have an apparition of the devil, or heare a noise in the night, they cry, The devil, The devil, and are ready to run out of their wits for feare; but they carry him in their hearts, and walk all the day long in his company, and feare him not. When thy proud heart is clambering up to the pinnacle of honour in thy ambitious thoughts, who sets thee there but the devil? when thy adulterous heart is big with all manner of uncleanness and filthiness, who but Satan hath been there, begetting these brats on thy whorish spirit? When thou art raging in thy passion, throwing

throwing burning coales of wrath and fury about with thy inflamed tongue, where was it set on fire but of hell? When thou art hurried like the swine into the precipice, and even choak't with thy own drunken vomit, who but the devil rides thee?

Thirdly, as spirits they are immortal. Of other enemies you may hear newes at last, that they are dead, which fought thy life, as the Angel told *Joseph of Herod*. Persecuting men walk a turne or two upon the stage, and are call'd off by death, and there is an end of all their plots; but devils die not, they will hunt thee to thy grave, and when thou diest they will meet thee in another world, to accuse and torment thee there also.

Fourthly, they are unwearied in their motions. When the fight is over among men, the Conquerour must sit down and breathe, and so loseth the chase, because not able to pursue it in time. Yea, some have given over their Empires, as glutted with the blood of men, and weary of the work, when they cannot have their will as they desired: Thus *Dicclifian*, because he saw he did but mowe a meadow, that grew the thicker for the cutting down, (as *Tertullian* speaks of the Christians martyred) he throws away his Scepter in a pet. *Charles* the fifth did the like (some say) upon the same reason, because he could not root out the Lutherans. But the devils spirit is never cowed, nor he weary of doing mischief, though he hath never stood still since first he began his walk to and fro the world. O what would become of us, if a God were not at our back, who is infinitely more the devils odds, then he ours.

SECT. II.

Secondly, they are wicked spirits; wicked in the abstract, as in the Text, and call'd by way of eminency in sin, *The wicked one*, Mat. 13. 19. As God is called the holy one, because none holier as the Lord. So, the devil, the wicked one, because he is a none-such in sinne. In a few particulars let us endeavour to take the height of the devils sinne, and the rather that we may judge of the degrees of sins, and sinners among the sons of men, the

nearer God in holinesse, the more holy; the liker the devil, the more wicked.

1. First, these Apostate Angels are the inventors of sinne; the first that sounded the Trumpet of rebellion against their Maker, and led the dance to all that sinne which since hath filled the world. Now what tongue can accent this sinne to its full? for such a noble creature whom God had set on the top as it were of all the Creation nearest to himselfe, from whom God had kept nothing but his own royal diadem, for this Peer and Favourite of the Court, without any cause or solicitation from any other, to make this bold and blasphemous attempt to snatch at Gods own Crown, this paints the devil blacker then the thoughts of men and Angels can conceive. He is called *the father of lies*, as those who found out any Art are called the father of it. *Jubal the father of all such as handle the harp and organ*; he invented Musick; and this is a dreadful aggravation, because they sinned without a Tempter. And though man is not in such a degree capable of this aggravation, yet some men sinne after the very similitude of the devils transgression in this respect, who as Saint Paul, *Rom. 1. 30.* stiles them, *are inventors of evil things*. Indeed sinne is an old trade, found out to our hand, but as in other Trades and Arts, some famous men arise, who adde to the inventions of others, and make Trades and Arts (as it were) new; so there ever are some infamous in their generation, that make old sinnes new by superadding to the wickedness of others. Uncleanesse is an old sinne from the beginning; but the *Sodomites* will be filthy in a new way, and therefore it carries their name to this day. Some invent new errors, others new oathes, such as are of their own coining, hot out of the mint, they scorne to swear after the old fashion. Others new devices of persecuting, as *Julian* had a way by himselfe different from all before him; and to the end of the world every age will exceed other in the degrees of sinning. *Ishmael* and the mockers of the old world, were but children and bunglers to the scoffers and cruel mockers of the last time. Well, take heed of shewing thy wit in inventing new sinnes, lest thou stir up God to invent new punishments. *Is not destruction to the wicked, and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?* Job 31.3. *Sodom* sinned after a new mode, and God destroys them after a new way,

way, sends hell from above upon them. Some have invented new opinions, monstrous errors, and God hath suited their monstrous errors with births as monstrous of their owne body.

Secondly, they were not only the inventors of sinne, but are still the chief tempters to, and promoters of sinne in the world, therefore call'd *αἰσαχνοί*, the tempter; and sinne called *the work of the devil*, whoever commits it; as the house goes by the name of the Maister-workman, though he useth his servants hands to build it. O take heed of soliciting others to sinne; thou takest the devils office (as I may say) out of his hand: let him do it himself if he will: make not thy selfe so like him. To tempt another is worse then to sin thy self. It speaks sin to be of great growth in that man, that doth it knowingly and willingly. Herbs and flowers shed not their seed till ripe, creatures propagate not, till of stature and age. What do those that tempt others, but diffuse their wicked opinions and practices, and as it were, raise up seed to the devil; thereby to keep up the name of their infernal father in the world? this shews sin is mighty in them indeed. Many a man though so cruel to his own soul as to be drunk or swear, yet will not like this in a childe or servant; what are they then but devils incarnate, who teach their children the devils Catechisme, to swear and lie, drink and drab; If you meet such be not afraid to call them (as Paul did *Elymas*, when he would have perverted the Deputy) children of the devil, full of all subtilty and mischief, and enemies of all righteousness. O do you not know what you do when you tempt? I'll tell you, you do that which you cannot undo by your own repentance; thou poisonest one with error, initiatest another in the devils School, (Alehouse I mean) but afterwards may be thou seest thy mistake, and recantest thy error, thy folly, and givest over thy drunken trade; art thou sure now to rectifie and convert them with thy self? alas, poor creatures! this is out of thy power, they may be will say as he (though he did it upon a better account) that was solicited to turne back to popery by him, who had before perswaded him to renounce the same. *You have given me one turn, but shall not give me another.* And what a grief to thy spirit will it be, to see these going to hell on thy errand, and

and thou not able to call them back? thou mayest cry out as *Lamech, I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.* Nay, when thou art asleep in thy grave, he whom thou seducedst may have drawn in others, and thy name may be quoted to commend the opinion and practice to others, by which (as it is said, though in another sense, *Abel being dead yet speaks*) thou mayest, though dead *sinne* in those that are alive, generation after generation. A little spark kindled by the error of one, hath cost the paines of many ages to quench it, and when thought to be out, hath broke forth again.

3. Thirdly, they are not barely wicked, but maliciously wicked. The devil hath his name *ἁντιχριστός*, to denote his spiteful nature, his desire to vex and mischief others. When he drawes soules to sin, it is not because he tastes any sweetnesse, or findes any profit therein, he hath too much light to have any joy or peace in sin: he knows his doom, and trembles at the thought of it, and yet his spiteful nature makes him vehemently desire and uncessantly endeavour the damnation of soules. As you shall see a mad dog run after a flock of sheep, kill one, then another, and when dead not able to eat of their flesh, but kills to kill: so Satan is carried out with a boundlesse rage against man, especially the Saints, he would not, if he could, leave one of Christs flock alive; such is the height of his malice against God, whom he hates with a perfect hatred and because he cannot reach him with a direct blow, therefore he strikes him at the second hand through his Saints, that wicked arme which reacheth not to God, is extended against these excellent on the earth, well knowing the life of God is in a manner bound up in theirs. God cannot outlive his honour, and his honour speeds as his mercy is exalted or depressed; this being the attribute God meanes to honour in their salvation so highly, and therefore maligned above the rest by Satan. And this is the worst that can be said of these wicked spirits, that they maliciously spite God, and in God the glory of his mercy.

Use 1.

First, this may help us to conceive more fully what the desperate wickednesse of mans nature is, which is so hard to be known, because it can never be seen at once, it being a fountain whose immensity consists not in the stream of actual sinne (that is visible, and may seem little) but in the spring the

un-

unceffantly feeds this, but here is a glasse that will give us the shape of our hearts truly like themselves. Seest thou the monstrous pitch and height of wickednesse that is in the devil? all this there is in the heart of every man, there is no lesse wickednesse potentially in the tamest sinner on earth, then in the devils themselves, and that one day thou, whoever thou art, wilt shew to purpose, if God prevent thee not by his renewing grace, thou art not yet fledg'd, thy wings are not grown to make thee a flying Dragon, but thou art of the same brood, the seed of this serpent is in thee, and the devil begets a childe like himselfe; thou yet standest in a soile not so proper for the ripening of sinne, which will not come to its fulnesse till transplanted unto hell. Thou who art here so maidenly and modest, as to blush at some finnes out of shame, and forbear the acting of others out of fear, when there thou shalt see thy case as desperate as the devil doth his, then thou wilt spit out thy blasphemies, with which thy nature is stuff't, with the same malice that he doth. The Indians have a conceit, that when they die, they shall be transform'd into the deformed likenesse of the devil, therefore in their language they have the same word for a dead man and the devil; sinne makes the wicked like him before they come there, but indeed they will come to their countenance more fully there, when those flames shall wash off that paint, which here hides their complexion. The Saints in Heaven shall be like the Angels in their alacrity, love and constancy to serve God, and the damned like the devils in sinne as well as punishment. This one consideration might be of excellent use to unbottoome a sinner, and abase him, so as never to have high thought of himself. It is easie to runne down a person whose life is wicked, and convince him of the evil of his actions, and make him confesse what he doth is evil, but here is the thicket we lose him in, he will say, 'tis true, I am overseen; I do what I should not, God forgive me; but my heart is good. Thy heart good, sinner? and so is the devils, his nature is wicked, and thine as bad as his. These pimples in thy face shew the heat of thy corrupt nature within, and without Gospel-physick, the blood of Christ applied to thee, thou wilt die a Leper; none but Christ can give thee a new heart, till which thou wilt every day grow worfe and worfe. Sin is an hereditary disease that encreaseth

Use 2.

with age. A young sinner will be an old devil.

Again, it would be of use to the Saints especially, those in whom God by his timely call forestall'd the devils market; as sometimes the Spirit of God takes sin in its quarters before it comes into the field, in the sins of youth; now such a one finding not those daring finnes committed by him that others have been left unto, may possibly not be so affected with his own sinne or Gods mercy. O let such a one behold here the wickednesse of his heart in this glasse of the devils nature, and he will see himself as a great debtor to the mercy of God as *Manasses*, or the worst of sinners, as in pardoning, so in preventing the same cursed nature with theirs, before it gave fire on God with those bloody finnes which they committed. That thou didst not act such outrageous finnes, thou art beholden to Gods gracious surprize, and not the goodnesse of thy nature, which hath the devils stamp on it, for which God might have crucifit thee, as we do the brood of Serpents before they sting, knowing what they will do in time. Who will say that *Faux* suffered unjustly, because the Parliament was not blown up? it was enough that the materials for that Massacre were provided, and he taken there with match and fire about him ready to lay the traine; and canst thou say when God first took hold on thee, that thou hadst not those weapons of rebellion about thee, a nature fully charged with enmity against God, which in time would have made its own report of what for present lay like unfired powder silent in thy bosome? O Christian, think of this, and be humbled for thy villainous nature, and say, Blessed be God that sent his Spirit and grace so timely to stay thy hand (as *Abigail* to *David*) while thy nature meditated nothing but warre against God and his Laws.

Use 3.

Again, Thirdly, are the devils so wicked malicious against God himself? O Sirs, take the right notion of sinne, and you will hate it. The reason why we are so easily perswaded to sinne, is, because we understand not the bottom of his designe in drawing a creature to sinne. It is with men in sinning as it is with Armies in fighting; Captains beat their drummes for Voluntiers, and promise all that list, pay and plunder, and this makes them come trowling in: but few consider what the ground of the Warre is, against whom, or for what. Satan enticeth to sinne,

finne, and gives golden Promises what they shall have in his service with which silly souls are won; but how few ask their souls. Whom do I sinne against? what is the devils designe in drawing me to sinne? Shall I tell thee? dost thou think 'tis thy pleasure or profit he desires in thy sinning? alas, he means nothing lesse, he hath greater plots in his head then so. He hath by his Apostasie proclaim'd warre against God, and he brings thee by sinning to espouse his quarrel, and to jeopard the life of thy soul in defence of his pride and lust, which that he may do, he cares no more for the damnation of thy soul, then the great Turk doth to see a company of his slaves cut off for the carrying on of his designe in a siege: And darest thou venture to go into the field upon his quarrel against God? O Earth, tremble thou at the Presence of the Lord. This bloody *Joab* sets thee where never came any off alive. O stand not where Gods bullets flie, throw down thy armes, or thou art a dead man. Whatever others do, O ye Saints, abhorre the thoughts of sinning willingly, which when you do, you help the devil against God, and what more unnatural then for a child to be seen in armes against his Father?



CHAP. VII.

Of Satans Plot to defile the Christians spirit with heart-sinnes.

The Second Point follows.

THAT these wicked spirits do chiefly annoy the Saints with, and provoke them to spiritual sinnes. Sinnes may be called spiritual upon a double account; either from the subject wherein they are acted, or from the object about which they are conversant. *Dost. 2.*

First, in regard of the subject, when the spirit or heart is the stage whereon sinne is acted, this is a spiritual sinne; such

are all impure thoughts, vile affections and desires; though the object be fleshly lust, yet are spiritual sinnes, because they are purely acts of the soul and spirit, and break not forth unto the outward man.

Secondly, in regard of the object, when that is spiritual and not carnal, such as are idol try, error, spiritual pride, unbelief, &c. both which *Paul* calls *the filthinesse of the spirit*, and distinguisheth them from *filthinesse of the flesh*, 2 Cor. 7. 1.

SECT. I.

First, of the first, Satan labours what he can to provoke the Christian to heart-sinnes, to stir up and foment these inward motions of sinne in the Christians bosome; hence it is he can go about no duty, but these (his Impes I may call them) haunt him, one motion or other darts in to interrupt him, as *Paul* tells us of himselfe, *When he would do good, evil was present with him*; if a Christian should turne back, when ever these crosse the way of him, he should never go on his journey to heaven. It is the chief game the devil hath left to play against the children of God; now his field-army is broken, and his commanding power taken away which he had over them, to come out of these his holds where he lies sculking, and fall upon their rear with these suggestions. He knows his credit now is not so great with the soul, as when it was his slave; then no drudgery work was so base that it would not do at his command, but now the soul is out of his bondage, and he must not think to command anothers servant as his own: No, all he can do is to watch the fittest season (when the Christian least suspects) and then to present some sinful motion handsomely drest up to the eye of the soul, that the Christian may (before he is aware) take this brat up and dandle it in his thoughts, till at last he makes it his own by embracing it; and this he knows will defile the soul, and may be this boy sent in at the window may open the door to let in a greater thief; or if he should not so prevail, yet the guilt of these heart-sins, yea, their very neighbour-hood will be a sad vexation to a gracious heart,
whose

whose nature is so pure that it abhorres all filthiness (so that to be haunted with such motions, is, as if a living man should be chain'd to a stinking carcasse, that where ever he goes he must draw that after him) and whose love is so dear to Christ that it cannot bear the company of those thoughts without amazement and horror, which are so contrary and abusive to his beloved. This makes Satan so desirous to be ever raking in the unregenerate part, that as a dunghil stirr'd, it may offend them both with the noisome streams which arise from it.

S E C T. II.

First, let this be for trial of thy spiritual state. What entertainment findes Satan when he comes with these spirituals of wickednesse, and solicites thee to dwell on them? canst thou dispenſe with the filthinesse of thy spirit, so thy hands be clean? or dost thou wrestle against these heart-sinnes as well as others? I do not ask whether such guests come within thy door? for the worst of sinnes may be found in the motions of them, not only passing by the door of a Christian, but looking in also; as holy motions may be found stirring in the bosome of wicked men: but I ask thee whether thou canst finde in thy heart to lodge these guests and bid them welcome? 'Tis like thou would'st not be seen to walk in the street with such company not lead a whore by the hand through the Town, nor violently break open thy neighbours house to murder or rob him: but canst thou not under thy own rooffe, in the withdrawing room of thy soul, let thy thoughts hold up an unclean lust, while thy heart commits speculative folly with it? canst thou not draw thy neighbour into thy den, and there rend him limb from limb by thy malice, and thy heart not so much as cry murder, murder? In a word, canst thou hide any one sinne in the vance rooffe of thy heart, there to save the life of it when enquired after by the Word and Spirit, as *Rahab* hid the Spies, and sent the King of *Jerichoes* messengers to pursue them as if they had been gone? Perhaps thou canst say the adulterer, the murderer is not here, thou hast sent these sinnes away long ago, and all this while thou hidest them

Use 1.

in the love of thy soul; know it or thou shalt another day know it to thy cost, thou art stark naught. If there were a spark of the life of God, or the love of Christ in thy bosome, though thou couldest not hinder such motions in thy soul, yet thou wouldest not conceal them, much lesse nourish them in thy bosome; when over-power'd by them wouldest thou call in help from heaven against these destroyers of thy soul.

Use 2.

Secondly, shew your loyalty, O ye Saints, to God by a vigorous resistance of, and wrestling against these spirituals of wickednesse. First, consider, Christian, heart-sinnes are sinnes as well as any; *The thought of foolishnesse is sinne*, Prov. 24. 9. Mercury is poison in the water distill'd, as well as in the grosse body. Uncleanesse, covetousnesse, murder are such in the heart as well as in the outward act; every point of hell, is hell. Secondly, consider thy spirit is the seat of the holy Spirit. He takes up the whole heart for his lodging, and 'tis time for him to be gone when he sees his house let over his head. Defile not thy spirit till thou art weary of his company. Thirdly, consider, there may be more wickednesse in a sinne of the heart, then of the hand and outward man; for the aggravation of these is taken from the behaviour of the heart in the act. The more of the heart and spirit is let out, the more malignity is let in to any sinful act; *To back-slide in heart*, is more then to back-slide, 'tis the comfort of a poor soul when tempted and troubled for his relapses, that though his foot slides back, yet his heart turns not back, but faceth Heaven and Christ at the same time; *so to erre in the heart*, is worse then to have an error in the head; therefore God aggravates *Israels sinne* with this, *They do always erre in their heart*. Their hearts runne them upon the error, they liked idolatry, and so were soon made to believe what pleased them best. As on the contrary the more of the heart & spirit is in any holy service, the more real goodnesse there is in it, though it fall short of others in the outward expression. The widowes two mites surpassed all the rest, Christ himself being Judge; so in sinne, though the internal acts of sinne in thoughts and affections seem light upon mans balance, if compared with outward acts, yet these may be so circumstanciaded that they may exceed the other in Gods account; *Peter* lays the accent of *Magus* his sinne on the wicked thought, which his words betrayed to be in his

Heb. 3. 10.

his heart, *Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven*, Acts 8. 22. *Sauls sinne in sparing Agag, and saving the best of the sheep and oxen, which he was commanded to destroy, was materially a farre lesse sinne then Davids adultery and murder, yet it is made equal with a greater then both, even witch-craft it self*, 1 Sam. 15. 23. and whence receiv'd his sinne such a die, but from the wickednesse of his heart that was worse then Davids when deepest in the temptation? Fourthly, if Satan get into thy Spirit and defile it. O how hard wilt thou finde it to stay there? thou hast already sipt of his broth, and now art more likely to be overcome at last to sit down and make thy full meal of that, which by tasting hath vitiated thy palate already. It were strange if while thou art musing, and thy heart hot with the thought of lust, the fire should not break forth at thy lips or worse.

But what help have we against this sort of Satans temptations? *Quest.*

I suppose thee a Christian, that makest this question; and if thou dost it in the plainnesse of thy heart it proves thee one. *Ans.* Who besides will, or can desire in earnest to be eased of these guests? even when a carnal heart prayes for deliverance from them, he would be loath his prayer should be heard. *Not yet Lord*, the heart of such a one cries, as *Austin* confessed of himself. Sin is as truly the off-spring of the soule, as children are of our bodies, and it findes as much favour in our eyes, yea, more, for the sinner can slay a son to save a sin alive, *Micah* 6. 7. and of all sinnes none are made more on then these heart sins.

First, because they are the first borne of the sinful heart, and the chiefeft strength of the soul is laid out upon them.

Secondly, because the heart hath more scope in them then in outward acts. The proud man is itaked down oft to a short state, and cannot ruffle it in the world, and appear to others in that pomp he would; but within his own bosome he can set up a stage, and in his own foolish heart present himself as great a Prince as he pleaseth. The malicious can kill in his desires, as many in a few minutes, as the Angel smote in a night of *Sennacheribs* host. *Nero* thus could slay all *Rome* on the block at once.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, these sins stay with the soule when the other leave it; when the sinner hath crippled his body with drunkennesse and filthinesse, and proves *miles emeritus*, cannot follow the devils camp longer in those wayes, then these cursed lusts will entertain the sinner with stories of his old pranks and pleasures. In a word, these inward lusts of the heart have nothing but the conscience of a Deity to quell them. Other sins put the sinner to shame before men, and as some that believed on Christ, durst not confesse him openly, because they loved the praise of men, so there art sinners who are kept from vouching their lusts openly, for the same tendernesse to their reputation; but here is no feare of that, if they can but forget that heaven sees them, or perswade themselves there is no danger from thence; the coast then is clear, they may be as wicked as they please. These make inward sins so hugg'd and embraced. If thou therefore canst finde thy heart set against these, I may venture to call thee a Christian, and for thy help against them,

I.

First, be earnest with God in prayer to move and order thy heart in its thoughts and desires. If the tongue be such an unruly thing that few can tame; O what is the heart where such a multitude of thoughts are flying forth as thick as bees from the hive, and sparks from the furnace! It is not in man, not in the holiest on earth to do this without divine assistance. Therefore we finde *David* so often crying out in this respect, to order his steps in his Word, to unite his heart to his feare, to encline his heart to his testimonies. As a servant, when the childe he tends is troublefom, and will not be ruled by him, calls out to the father to come to him, who no sooner speaks, but all is whist with him; No doubt holy *David* found his heart beyond his skill or power, that makes him so oft do its errand to God. Indeed God hath promised thus much to his children, to order their steps for them, *Psal.* 37. 22. only he looks they should bring their hearts to him for that end. *Commit thy work to the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established,* Prov. 16. 3. or ordered. Art thou setting thy face towards an Ordinance, where thou art sure to meet Satan, who will be disturbing thee with worldly thoughts, and may be worse? Let God know from thy mouth whither thou art going, and what thy feares are; never

never doth the soule march in so goodly order, as when it put it self under the conduct of God.

Secondly, set a strong guard about thy outward senses: these are Satans landing places, especially the eye and the eare. Take heed what thou importest at these; vain discourse seldom passeth without leaving some tincture upon the heart, as unwholesome aire inclines to putrefaction things sweet in themselves, so unfavoury discourse to corrupt the minde that is pure; look thou breatheest therefore in a clear aire. And for thy eye, let it not wander, wanton objects cause wanton thoughts. *Job* knew his eye and his thoughts were like to go together, and therefore to secure one, he covenants with the other, *Job* 31. 1.

Thirdly, often reflect upon thy self in a day, and observe what company is with thy heart. A careful Master will ever and anon be looking into his work-house, and see what his servants are doing, and a wise Christian should do the same. We may know by the noise in the school, the Master is not there: much of the mis-rule in our bosomes ariseth from the neglect of visiting our hearts. Now when thou art parlying with thy soul, make this threefold enquiry.

First, whether that which thy heart is thinking on be good or evil. If evil and wicked, such as are proud, unclean, distrustful thoughts, shew thy abhorrency of them, and chide thy soul sharply for so much as holding conference with them, of which nought can come, but dishonour to God, and mischief to thy own soul, and stirre up thy heart to mourn for the evil neighbourhood of them, and by this thou shalt give a testimony of thy faithfulness to God. When *David* mourn'd for *Abner*, all *Israel*, 'tis said, understood that day, that it was not of the King to slay *Abner*: Thy mourning for them will shew these thoughts are not so much of thee, as of Satan.

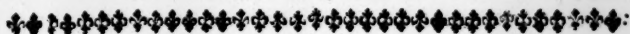
Secondly, if they be not broadly wicked, enquire whether they be not empty, frothy, vain imaginations, that have no subserviency to the glory of God, thy own good or others; and if so, leave not till thou hast made thy self apprehensive of Satans deligne on thee in them; though such are not for thy purpose, yet they are for his, they serve his turne to keep thee from better. All the water is lost that runnes beside the mill, and all thy

thoughts are waste which help thee not to do Gods work withal in thy general or particular calling. The Bee will not sit on a flower where no honey can be suck't, neither should the Christian. Why sittest thou here idle, (thou shouldest say to thy soul) when thou hast so much to do for God and thy soul, and so little time to dispatch it in?

3. Thirdly, if thou findest they are good for matter, thy heart is busied about, then enquire whether they be good for time and manner, which being wanting they degenerate.

1. First, for the season, that is good fruit which is brought forth in its season. Christ liked the work his mother would have put him upon as well as her self, *John 2.* but his time was not come. Good thoughts and meditations misplaced, are like some interpretations of Scripture, good truths, but bad expositions; they fit not the place they are drawn from, nor these the time. To pray when we should hear, or be musing on the Sermon when we should pray, this is to rob God one way, to pay him another.

2. Secondly, carefully observe the manner. Thy heart may meditate a good matter, and spoile it in the doing. Thou art may be musing of thy sinnes, and affecting thy heart into a sense of them, but so, that while thou art stirring up thy sorrow, thou weakenest thy faith on the promise, that is thy sinne. He is a bad Chirurgion, that in opening a vein goes so deep that he cuts an artery, and lames the arme, if not kills the man. Or thou art thinking of thy family, and providing for that, this thou oughtest to do, and wert worse then an infidel if thou neglectest, but may be these thoughts are so distracting and distrustful, as if there were no Promise, no Providence to relieve thee. God takes this ill, because it reflects upon his care of thee, O how near doth our duty here stand to our sinne! so much care is necessary ballast to the soul, a little more sinks it under the waves of unbelief; like some things very wholesome, but one degree more of hot or cold would make them poison.



CHAP. VIII.

*How Satan labours to corrupt the Christians
minde with error.*

THe second sort of spiritual finnes are such as are not only acted in the spirit, but are conversant about spiritual objects proper to the soules nature that is a spirit, and not laid out in carnal passions of fleshly lusts, in which the soul acts but as a Pander for the body, and partakes of their delights only by way of sympathy; for as the soul feels the bodies pains no other way then by sympathy, so neither doth it share in the pleasures of the flesh by any proper taste it hath of them, but only from its near neighbourhood with the body doth sympathize with its joy, but in spiritual wickednesse that corrupt the minde, here the soul moves in its own Sphere, with a delight proper to it selfe, and there are no lesse of these then the other. There is hardly a fleshly lust, but hath some spiritual sinne analogical to it, as they say there is no species of creatures on the land, but may be pattern'd in the sea: Thus the heart of man can produce spiritual finnes answering carnal lusts; for whoredom and uncleanness of the flesh, there is idolatry call'd in Scripture spiritual adultery, from which the seat of Antichrist is called spiritual *Sodom*; for sensual drunkennesse, there is a drunkenness of the minde intoxicating the judgement with error, a drunkenness of the heart in cares and feares: for carnal pride in beauty, riches, honour, there is a spiritual pride of gifts, graces, &c. Now Satan in an especial manner assaults the Christian with such as these; it would require a larger discourse then I can allow to run over the several kinds of them; I shall of many pick out two or three. As first, Satan labours to corrupt the minde with erroneous principles, he was at work at the very first plantation of the Gospel, sowing his darnel, as soon almost as Christ his wheate, which sprung up in pernicious errors, even in the Apostles times, which made them take the weeding-hook into their hands, and in all

their Epistles labour to countermine Satan in this designe. Now Satan hath a threefold designe in this his endeavour to corrupt the mindes of men, especially Professours, with error.

SECT. I.

- I. First, he doth this in despite to God, against whom he cannot vent his malice at a higher rate, then by corrupting his truth, which God hath so highly honoured, *Psal. 138.2. Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name.* Every creature bears the Name of God, but in his Word and truth therein contained 'tis writ at length, and therefore he is more choice of this, then of all his other works; he cares not much what becomes of the world and all in it, so he keeps his Word, and saves his truth. Ere long we shal see the world on a light flame, *The heavens and earth shall passe away, but the Word of the Lord endures for ever.* When God will, he can make more such worlds as this is, but he cannot make another truth, and therefore he will not lose one *iota* thereof. Satan knowing this, sets all his wits on work to deface this truth, and disfigure it by unfound doctrine. The Word is the glasse in which we see God, and seeing him, are changed into his likenesse by his Spirit. If this glasse be crack't, then our conceptions we have of God will mis-represent him unto us, whereas the Word in its native clearnesse sets him out in all his glory unto our eye.

2. Secondly, he endeavours to draw into this spiritual sin of error, as the most subtle and effectual means to weaken, if not destroy the Power of Godlinesse in them. The Apostle joyns the Spirit of power and a sound minde together, *2Tim. 1.7.* Indeed the power of holinesse in practice depends much on the soundnesse of judgement. Godlinesse is the childe of truth, and it must be nurs't, if we will have it thrive, with no other milk then of its own mother. Therefore we are exhorted to *desire the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow, 1Pet. 2.2. ἀέριον γάλα,* if this milk be but a little dash't with error, it is not so nutritive. All error, how innocent soever any may seem (like the Ivy) draws away the strength of the souls love from holinesse. *Hosea* tells us, whoredom and wine take away the heart, now
error

error is spiritual adultery. *Paul* speaks of his espousing them to Christ, when a person receives an error, he takes a stranger into Christs bed, and it is the nature of adulterous love to take away the wifes heart from her true husband, that she delights not in his company so much as of her adulterous lover: and do we not see it at this day fulfill'd? do not many shew more zeal in contending for one error, then for many truths? how strangely are the hearts of many taken off from the wayes of God, their love cool'd to the Ordinances and Messengers of Christ? and all this occasioned by some corrupt principle got into their bosomes, which controuls Christ and his truth, as *Hagar* and her son did *Sarah* and her childe. Indeed Christ will never enjoy true conjugal love from the soul, till like *Abraham* he turns these out of doors. Error is not so innocent a thing as many think it; it is as unwholesom food to the body, that poisons the spirits, and surfets the whole body, which seldom passeth away, and not break out into sores. As the knowledge of Christ carries a soul above the pollutions of the world, so error entangles and betrays it to those lusts, whose hands it had escaped.

Thirdly, Satan in drawing a soul into this spiritual sin hath a designe to disturb the peace of the Church, which is rent and shattered when this fire-ship comes among them. *I hear (saith Paul) there are divisions among you, and I partly beleve it, for there must be heresies.* 1 Cor. 11. 18, 19. implying that divisions are the natural issue of heresie. Error cannot well agree with error, except it be against the truth, then indeed (like *Pilate* and *Hirca*) they are easily made friends, but when truth seems to be overcome and the battel is over with that, then they fall out among themselves, and therefore it is no wonder if it be so troublesome a neighbour to truth. O Sirs, what a sweet silence and peace was there among Christians a dozen years ago; methinks the looking back to those blessed days in this respect, (though they had also another way their troubles, yet not so uncomfortable, because that storme united, this scatters the Saints spirits) is joyous to remember in what unity & love Christians walk't, that the Persecutors of those times might have said, as their Predecessours did of the Saints in primitive times, *See how they love one another*; but now alas they may jeer and

say, See how they that loved so dearly, are ready to pluck one anothers throats out.

SECT. II.

Use

The application of this shall be only in a word of exhortation to all, especially you who bear the name of Christ by a more eminent Profession of him. Obeware of this soul-infection, this leprosie of the head. I hope you do not think it needlesse, for 'tis the disease of the times. This plague is begun, yea, spreads apace, not a flock, a Congregation hardly that hath not this scab among them. *Paul* was a Preacher, the best of us all may write after, and he presseth this home upon the Saints, yea, in the constant course of his preaching it made a piece of his Sermon, *Acts* 20. 30, 31. he sets us Preachers also on this work: *Take heed to your selves, and to all the flock; for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter; also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things; therefore watch.* And then he presents his own example, that he hardly made a Sermon for several years, but this was part of it, to warn every one night and day with teares. We need not prophesie what Impostors may come upon the stage, when we go off: There are too many at present above-board of this gang, drawing disciples after them. And if it be our duty to warn you of them, surely 'tis yours to watch, lest you by any of them be led into temptation in this houre thereof, wherein Satan is let loose in so great a measure to deceive the Nation. May you not as easily be fowered with this leaven, as the disciples whom Christ bids beware? Are you priviledged above those famous Churches of *Galatia* and *Corinth*, many of which were bewitched with false teachers, and in a manner turned to another Gospel? Is Satan grown Orthodox, or have his instruments lost their cunning, who hunt for souls? In a word, is there not a sympathy between thy corrupt heart and error? Hast thou not a disposition, which like the *femes* of the earth, makes it natural for these weeds to grow in thy soile. Seest thou not many prostrated by this enemy, who sate upon the mountain of their faith, and thought it should never have been removed, surely they would have

have took it ill, to have been told you are the men and women that will decry Sabbaths, which now ye count holy; you will turn Pelagians, who now deſie the name; you will deſpiſe Prophecie it ſelf, who now ſeem ſo much to honour the Prophets; you will throw family-duties out of doors, who dare not now go out of doors, till you have prayed there. Yet theſe, and more then theſe are come to paſſe, and doth it not behove thee (Chriſtian) to take heed leſt thou fallieſt alſo? and that thou mayeſt not,

First, make it thy chief care to get a through change of thy heart. If once the root of the matter be in thee, and thou beeſt bottom'd by a lively faith on Chriſt, thou art then ſafe, I do not ſay wholly free from all errour, but this I am ſure, free from ingulphing thy ſoule in damning errour. *They went out from us, (ſaith Saint John) but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us,* 1 John 2.19. As if he had ſaid, they had ſome outward Profeſſion, and common work of the Spirit with us, which they have either loſt or carried over to the devils quarters, but they never had the unction of the ſanctifying Spirit. By this, v. 20. he diſtinguiſheth them, and comforts the ſincere ones, who poſſibly might fear their own fall by their departure: *But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.* 'Tis one thing to know a truth, and another thing to know it by unction. An hypocrite may dothe former, the Saint only the latter. It is this unction which gives the ſoule the ſavour of the knowledge of Chriſt, thoſe are the fit prey for Impoſtors, who are enlightened, but not enlivened. O its good to have the heart eſtabliſh't with grace, this as an anchor, will keep us from being ſet a drift, and carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines, as the Apoſtle teacheth us, *Heb.* 13.9.

Secondly, ply the work of mortification. Crucifie the fleſh daily. Hereſie, though a ſpiritual ſinne, yet by the Apoſtle reckon'd among the deeds of the fleſh, *Gal.* 5.20. becauſe it is occaſioned by fleſhly motives, and nourish't by carnal food and fuel. Never any turn'd Heretick, but fleſh was at the bottom, either they ſerv'd their belly, or a luſt of pride; 'twas the way to Court, or ſecur'd their eſtates, and ſaved their lives, as ſometimes the reward of truth is fire and ſagot; ſome pad or other

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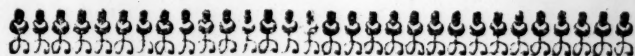
2.

is in the straw when least seen, and therefore it is no wonder that heresies should end in the flesh, which in a manner sprang from it. The rheume in the head ascends in fumes from the stomack, and returnes thither, or unto the lungs which at last fret and ulcerate: Carnal affections first send up their fumes to the understanding, clouding that, yea, bribing it to receive such and such principles for truths, which embraced, fall down into the life corrupting that with the ulcer of profanenesse. So that, Christian, if once thou canst take off thy engagements to the flesh, and become a free man, so as not to give thy vote to gratifie thy carnal fears or hopes, thou wilt then be a sure friend to truth.

3. Thirdly, wait conscionably on the Ministry of the Word. Satan commonly stops the eare from hearing sound doctrine, before he opens it to embrace corrupt. This is the method of foules apostatizing from truth, *2Tim. 4. 3, 4. They shall turne their eares from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* Satan like a cunning thief drawes the soul out of the road into some lane or corner, and there robs him of the truth. By rejecting of one Ordinance we deprive our selves of the blessing of all other: say not that thou prayest to be led into truth, he will not hear thy prayer if thou turnest thine eare from hearing the law. He that loves his childe, when he sees him play the truant, will whip him to school? If God loves a soul, he will bring him back to the Word with shame and sorrow.

4. Fourthly, When thou hearest any unusefull doctrine, though never so pleasing, make not up the match hastily with it: have some better testimony of it, before you open your heart to it. The Apostle indeed bids us *entertain strangers*, for some have entertain'd Angels unawares, *Heb. 13. 3.* but he would not have us carried about with *strange doctrine*, verse 9. by this I am sure some have entertain'd devils. I confesse, 'tis not enough to reject a doctrine, because strange to us, but ground we have to wait and enquire. *Paul* marvelled that the *Galatians* were so soon removed from him, who had called them unto the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel; they might sure have stayed till they had acquainted *Paul* with it, and asked his judgement; what, no sooner an Impostor come into the country, and open his pack, but buy all his ware at first sight! O friends,
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were it not more wisdom to pray such new notions over and over again, to search the Word and our hearts by it, yea, not to trust our own hearts, but call in counsel from others? If your Minister have not such credit with you, yet the most holy, humble, and establish't Christians you can finde. Errour is like fish, which must be eaten new, or it will stink. When those dangerous errours sprung up first in *New England*. O how unsettled were many of the Churches? what an *ouris* was made, as if some mine of gold had been discovered; but in a while, when those errours came to their complexion, and it was perceived whither they were bound, to destroy Churches, Ordinances, and Power of Godlineſſe; then such as feared God, who had stept aside, returned back with shame and sorrow.



CHAP. IX.

Of Pride of Gifts, and how Satan tempts the Christian thereto.

THE second spiritual wickednesse which Satan provokes unto, especially the Saint, is spiritual pride. This was the sin made him, of a blessed Angel, a cursed devil; and as it was his personal sin, so he chiefly labours to derive it to the sons of men: and he so far prevailed on our first Parents, that ever since, this sin hath and doth claim a kinde of regency in the heart, making use both of bad and good to draw her chariot. First, of evil; Pride enters into the labours of other sins, they do but work to make her brave, as subjects to uphold the state and grandure of their Prince: Thus you shall see some drudge and droile, cheat, cosen, oppresse; and what mean they? O'tis to get an estate to maintain their pride. Others fawn and flatter, lie, dissemble, and for what? to help pride up some mount of honour. Again, it maketh use of that which is good, it can work with

Gods own tooles, his Ordinances, by which the holy Spirit advanceth his Kingdom of grace in the hearts of his Saints. These often are prostituted to pride. A man may be very zealous in prayer, and painful in preaching, and all the while pride is the Master whom he serves, though in Gods livery. It can take Sanctuary in the holiest actions, and hide it self under the skirt of vertue it self. Thus while a man is exercising his charity, pride may be the idol in secret for which he lavisheth out his gold so freely. It is hard starving this sin, because there is no thing almost but it can live on; nothing so base that a proud heart will not be lift up with, and nothing so sacred but it will prophane, even dare to drink in the bowles of the Sanctuary, nay, rather then starve, it will feed on the carcasses of other sins; *Difficile valde vitatur peccatum, quod ex victoria vitiorum nascitur.* This minion pride will stirre up the soul to resist, yea, in a manner kill some sins, that she may boastingly shew the head of them, and blow the creature up with the conceit of himself above others; as the Pharisee, who through pride bragged that he was not as the Publicane; so that pride, if not look't to, will have to do every where, and hath a large spheare it moves in. Nothing indeed (without divine assistance) the creature hath or doth, but will soon become a prey to this devourer; but I am not to handle it in its latitude. Pride is either conversant about carnal objects, as pride of beauty, strength, riches, and such like, or about spiritual; the latter we shall speak a little to. I confesse for the former, possibly a Saint may be caught in them, no sin to be slighted, yet not so commonly, for ordinarily pride is of those perfections which are suitable, if not proper to the state and calling we are in: thus the Musician, he is proud of the skill he hath in his Art, by which he excels others of his rank. The Scholar, though he can play perhaps as well, yet is not proud of that, but looks on it as beneath him; no, he is proud of his learning and choice notions, and so of others. Now the life of a Christian, as a Christian, is superiour to the life of man, as a man; and therefore doth not value himself by these which are beneath him, but in higher and more raised perfections, which suit a Christians calling. As a natural man is proud of perfections suitable to his natural state, as honour, beauty; so the Christian is prone chiefly, to be puffed up with perfections suitable

able to his life; I shall name three: pride of Gifts, pride of Grace, pride of Priviledges; these are the things which Satan chiefly labours to entangle him in.

SECT. I.

First, Pride of Gifts By Gifts I mean those supernatural abilities, with which the Spirit of God doth enrich and endow the mindes of men for edification of the body of Christ; of which gifts the Apostle tells us there is great diversity, and all from the same Spirit, *1 Cor. 12. 4.* There is not greater variety of colours and qualities in plants and flowers, with which the earth like a carpet of needle-work is variegated for the delight and service of man, then there is of gifts in the minds of men, natural and spiritual, to render them useful to one another, both in civil societies and Christian fellowship. The Christian as well as man is intended to be a sociable creature, and for the better managing this spiritual Common-wealth among Christians; God doth wisely and graciously provide and impart gifts, suitable to the place every one stands in to his brethren, as the vessels are larger, or lesse in the body natural, according to their place therein. Now Satan labours what he can to taint these gifts, and flie-blow them with pride in the Christian, that so he may spoile the Christians trade and commerce, which is mutually maintained by the gifts and graces of one another. Pride of gifts hinders the Christians trade, at least thriving by their commerce, two ways.

First, pride of Gifts is the cause why we do so little good with them to others.

Secondly, why we receive so little good from the gifts of others.

First, pride of Gifts hinders the doing of good by them to others, and that upon a threefold account.

First, pride diverts a man from aiming at that end; so far as pride prevails, the man prays, preaches, &c. rather to be thought good by others, then to do good to others; rather to enthrone himself, then Christ, in the opinions and hearts of his hearers. Pride carries the man aloft, to be admired for the height of his

parts and notions. and will not suffer him to stoop so low as to speak of plain truths, or if he does, not plainly; he must have some fine lace, though on a plain stufte, such a one may tickle the eare, but very unlikely to do real good to the soul: alas, it is not that he attends.

2. Secondly, if this painted *Jezebel* of pride be perceived to look out at the window in any exercise, whether of preaching, prayer, or conference, it doth beget a disdain in the spirits of those that heare such a one both good and bad. 'Tis a sin very odious to a gracious heart, and oft-times makes the stomach go against the food; though good, through their abhorrency of that pride they see in the instrument. It is indeed their weaknesse, but woe to them that by their pride lead them into temptation! nay, those that are bad and may be in the same kinde, like not that in another which they favour in themselves, and so prejudiced, return as bad as they went.

3. Thirdly, pride of gifts robs us of Gods blessing in the use of them. The humble man may have Satan at his right hand to oppose him, but be sure the proud man shall finde God himself there to resist him when-ever he goes about any duty. God proclaims so much, and would have the proud man know where-ever he meets him, he will oppose him; *he resists the proud*. Great gifts are beautiful as *Rachel*, but pride makes them also barren like her. Either we must lay self aside, or God will lay us aside.

2. Secondly, pride of gifts hinders the receiving of good from others. Pride fills the soul, and a full soul will take nothing from God, much lesse from man, to do it good. Such a one is very dainty; It is not every Sermon, though wholesom food, nor every prayer, though favoury, will go down; he must have a choice dish, he thinks he hath better then this of his own, and is such a one like to get good? And truly we may see it, that as the plain Plowman that can eat of any homely food if wholesom, hath more health, and is able to do more work in a day, then many enjoy or can do in their whole life, that are nice, squeamish, and courtly in their fare, so the humble Christian that can feed on plain truths, and Ordinances which have not so much of the Art of man to commend them to their palate, enjoy more of God, and can do more for God, then the nicer
fort.

sort of Professours, who are all to be served in a lordly dish of rare gifts. The Church of *Corinth* was famous for gifts above other Churches, *1 Cor. 1.* but not in grace; none so charged for weaknesse in that, *1 Cor. 3. 2.* he calls them *carnal, Babes in Christ*, so weak, as not able to digest mans meat; *I have fed you, saith Paul, with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* Why? what is the matter? the reason lies, *ver. 3. Ye are carnal, there is among you envie and strife, v. 4. One saith, I am of Paul, Another, I am of Apollos.* Pride makes them take parts, and make sides, one for this Preacher, another for that, as they fancied one to excel another. And this is not the way to thrive. Pride destroys love, and love wanting edification is lost. The devil hath made foul work in the Church by this Engine. *Zanchy* tells of one in *Ceneva*, who being desired to go hear *Viretus*, that preach't at the same time with *Calvin*, answered his friend, If *Paul* were to preach, *Relicto Paulo Calvinum audirem*: I would leave *Paul* himself to hear *Calvin*. And will pride in the gifts of another so far transport, even to the borders of blasphemy? what would then will pride make, when the gifts are a mans own?

SECT. II.

Doth Satan thus stir up Saints to this spiritual pride of gifts? First, here is a word to you that have mean gifts, yet truth of grace, be content with thy condition. Perhaps when thou hearst others, how enlargedly they pray, how able to discourse of the truths of God, and the like, thou art ready to go into a corner, and mourn to think how weak thy memory, how dull thy apprehension, how straitened thy spirit, hardly able (though in secret) to utter and expresse thy minde to God in prayer. O thou art ready to think those the happy men and women, and almost murmur at thy condition: well, canst thou not say, though I have not words, I hope I have faith; I cannot dispute for the truth, but I am willing to suffer for it; I cannot remember a Sermon, but I never hear the Word, but I hate sin and love Christ more then ever: Lord, thou knowest I love thee? Truly C(hristian) thou hast the better part; thou little think'st what

Use 1.

a mercy may be wrap't up even in the meannesse of thy gifts, or what temptations their gifts expose them to, which God for ought I know, may in mercy deny thee. *Josephs* coat made him finer then his brethren, but this caused all his trouble, this set the Archers a shooting their arrowes into his side; thus, great gifts lift a Saint up a little higher in the eyes of men, but it occasions many temptations which thou meetest not with, that art kept low, what with envie from their brethren, malice from Satan, and pride in their own hearts; I dare say, none find so hard a work to go to heaven as such, much ado to bear up against those waves and windes, while thou creepest along the shore under the winde to heaven. It is with such as with some great Lord of little estate, a meaner man oft hath money in his purse, when he hath none, and can lend his lordship some at a need: great gifts and parts are titles of honour among men, but many such may come and borrow grace and comfort of a meare-gifted brother, possibly the Preacher of his poor neighbour. O poor Christians do not murmur or envie them, but rather pity and pray for them, they need it more then others, his gifts are thine, thy grace is for thy self; thou art like a Merchant that hath his Factour goes to sea, but he hath his adventure without hazard brought home. Thou joynest with him in prayer, halt the help of his gifts, but not the temptation of his pride.

Use 2.

Secondly, doth Satan labour thus to draw to pride of gifts? this speaks a word to you to whom God hath given more gifts then ordinary; beware of pride, that is now your snare. Satan is at work, if possible, he will turne your Artillery against your selfe, thy safety lies in thy humility, if this lock be cut, the legions of hell are on thee. Remember whom thou wraistest with, spiritual wickednesse, and their play is to lift up, that they may give the forer fall. Now the more to stir up thy heart against it, I shall adde some soul-humbling considerations.

1.

First, consider these spiritual gifts are not thy own, and wilt thou be proud of anothers bounty? Is not God the Founder, and can he not soon be the Confounder of thy gifts? thou that art proud of thy gourd, what wilt thou be when it is gone? surely then thou wilt be peevish and angry, and truly thou takest the course to be stripp't of them. Gifts come on other termes then grace. God gives grace as a free-hold, it hath the promise

promise of this and another world, but gifts come on liking : though a father will not cast off his childe, yet he may take away his fine coat and ornaments, if proud of them.

Secondly, gifts are not meerly for thy self. As the light of the Sun is ministerial, it shines not for it selfe, so all thy gifts are for others ; *Gifts for the edifying of the body.* Suppose a man should leave a chest of money in your hands to be distributed to others, what folly is it in this man to put this into his own Inventory, and applaud himself that he hath so much money ? Poor soul, thou art but Gods *Executour*, and by that time thou hast paid all the Legacies, thou wilt see little left for thee to brag and boast of.

2.

Thirdly, know (Christian) thou shalt be accountable for these talents ; Now, with what face can a proud soul look on God ? Suppose one left an Executor to pay Legacies, and this man should pay them, not as Legacies of another, but gifts of his own : Christ at his ascension gave gifts that his children should receive, thou hast some in thy hand ; now a proud soul gives out all, not as the Legacy of Christ, but as his own, he assumes all to himself. O how abominable is this to entitle our selves to Christs honour !

3.

Fourthly, thy gifts commend thee not to God. Man may be taken with thy expression and notion in prayer : but these are all pared off when thy prayer comes before God ; *O woman (saith Christ) great is thy faith !* not compt and flourishing thy language. It were good after our duties, to sort the Ingredients of which they are made up, what grace contributed, and what gifts, and what pride, and when all the Heterogeneous stuffe is sever'd, you shall see in what a little compasse the actings of grace in our duties will lie.

4.

Fifthly, consider while thou art priding in thy gifts, thou art dwindling and withering in thy grace. Such are like corn that runs up much into straw, whose eare commonly is but light and thin. Grace is too much neglected, where gifts are too highly prized ; we are commanded to be clothed with humility. Our garments cover the shame of our bodies, humility the beauty of the soul ; and as a tender body cannot live without cloathes, so neither can grace without this cloathing of humility. It kills the Spirit of praise, when thou shouldest blesse God, thou art applauding.

5.

plauding thy self. It destroys Christian love, and stabs our fellowship with the Saints to the heart: A proud man hath not room enough to walk in company, because the gifts of others he thinks stand in his way. Pride so distempers the palate, that it can relish nothing that is drawn from anothers vessel.

6. Sixthly, it is the fore-runner of some great sin, or some great affliction. God will not suffer such a weed as pride to grow in his garden, without taking some course or other to root it up; may be he will let thee fall into some great sin, and that shall bring thee home with shame. God useth sometimes a thorn in the flesh, to prick the bladder of pride in the Spirit; or at least some great affliction; the very end whereof is to *hide pride from man*. As you do with your hot metall'd horses, ride them over plowed lands to tame them, and then you can sit safely on their back. If Gods honour be in danger through thy pride, then expect a rod, and most likely the affliction shall be in that, which will be most grievous to thee, in the thing thou art proud of. *Hezekiah* boasted of his treasure. God sends the *Chaldeans* to plunder him. *Jenah*, fond of his gourd, and that is smitten: And if thy Spirit be blowen up with pride of gifts, thou art in danger of having them blasted, at least in the opinion of others, whose breath of applause (possibly) was a means to overset thy unbalanced spirit.

SECT. III.

Quest.
Answ.

But how would you direct us against this?

Arguments you have had before, I shall only therefore point to two or three doors, where your enemy comes forth upon you, and surely the very sight thereof, if thou beest loyal to Christ, will stirre thee up to fall upon it.

I.

First, pride discovers it self in dwelling upon the thoughts of our gifts, with a secret kinde of content to see our own face, till at last we fall in love with it. We read of some whose eyes are full of the adulteresse, and cannot cease from sin: a proud heart is full of himself, his own abilities cast their shadow before him, they are in his eye whereever he goes, the great subject and
theam

theam of his thoughts is what he is, and what he hath above others, applauding himself, as *Bernard* confesseth, that (when one would think he had little leisure for such thoughts) even in preaching, pride would be whispering in his eare, *Bene fecisti Bernarde*. O well done *Bernard*. Now have a care (*Christian*) of chatting with such company. Run from such thoughts as from a Beare. If the devil can get thee to stand on this pinnacle, while he presents thee with the glory of thy spiritual attainments and endowments for thee to gaze on them, thy weak head will soon turn round in pride: and therefore labour to keep the sense of thy own infirmities lively in thy soule to divert the temptation. As those who are subject to some kind of fits, carry about them things proper for the disease, that when the fit is coming, (which oft is occasioned with a sweet perfume) they may use them for their help; Sweet scents are not more dangerous for them, then any thing that may applaud thee is to thy soul: Have a care therefore not only of wearing such thoughts in thy own bosome, but also of sitting by others; that bring the sweet scent of thy perfections to thee by their flattery.

Secondly, this kinde of pride appears in a forwardnesse to expose it self to view. *Dauids* brethren were mistaken in him indeed, but oft the pride and naughtinesse of the heart breaks out at this door. Christs carnal friends bid Christ shew himselfe; pride loves to climbe up, not as *Zaccheus*, to see Christ, but to be seen himself. *The fool* (*Solomon* tells us) *hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover it self*, Prov. 18. 2. Pride would be some body, and therefore comes abroad to court the multitude, whereas humility delights in privacy; as the leaves do cover and shade the fruits, that some hand must gently lift up them, before they can see the fruit; so should humility and a holy modesty conceal the perfections of the soul, till a hand of Providence by some call invites them out. There is a pride in naked gifts, as well as in naked breasts and backs: humility is a necessary veile to all other graces; and therefore first, *Christian*, look when-ever thou comest forth to publike duty, that thou hast a call; it is obedience to be ready to answer, when God calls thee forth, but its pride to run before God speaks. Secondly, when call'd, earnestly implore divine strength against this enemy: shun not a duty for fear of pride, then

mayest shew it in the very seeming to escape it, but go in the strength of God against it; there is more hope of overcoming it by obedience then disobedience.

3. Thirdly, in envying the gifts of others, when they seeme to blinde our own, that they are not so faire a prospect as we desire. This is a weed may grow too rank in a good soile. *Aaron* and *Miriam* could not bear *Moses* his honour, *Numb.* 12. 1. that was the businesse, though they pick a quarrel with him about his wife (because an *Ethiopian*) as appears plainly, v. 2. *Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?* They thought *Moses* went away with too much of the honour, and did repine that God should use him more then themselves. And 'tis observable, that the lusting for flesh broke out among the mixt multitude, and baser sort of people, *Numb.* 11. 4. 5. but this of pride and envie took fire in the bosomes of the most eminent for Place and Piety. O what need then have we, poor creatures, to watch our hearts when we see such precious servants of God led into temptation? *The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envie*, *James* 4. 5. Our corrupt nature is ever putting on to this sin. 'Tis as hard to keep our hearts and this sin asunder, as it is to hinder two lovers from meeting together: Thatch is not more ready to be fired with every flash of lighting, then the heart to be kindled at the shining forth of any excellent gift or grace in another. It was one of the first windows that corrupt nature look't out at, a sin that shed the first blood; *Cains* envy hatch't *Abels* murder. Now if ever thou meanest to get the mastery of this sin,

First, call in help from heaven. No sooner hath the Apostle set forth, how big and teeming full the heart of man is with envy, but he shews where a fountain of grace is infinitely exceeding that of lust; *The spirit within us lusteth to envie, but he giveth more grace*, v. 5. And therefore sit not down tamely under this sin, it is not unconquerable. God can give thee more grace then thou hast sin, more humility then thou hast pride. Be but so humble as cordially to beg his grace, and thou shalt not be so proud as wickedly to envie his gifts or grace in others.

4. Secondly, make this sin as black and ugly as thou canst possibly to thy thought, that when its presented to thee, thou mayst abhor it the more. Indeed there needs no more then its own face,

face, (wouldest thou look wishly on it) to make thee out of love with it. For first, this envying of others gifts, casts great contempt upon God, and that more wayes then one.

First, when thou envieest the gifts of thy brethren, thou takest upon thee to teach God what he shall give, and to whom; as if the great God should take counsel or ask leave of thee before he dispenseth his gifts, and darest thou stand to thy own envious thoughts with this interpretation? such a one thou findest Christ himself give, *Mat. 20. 15.* *Is it not Lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* as if Christ had said, what hath any to do to cavil at my dispose of what is not theirs but mine to give?

Secondly, thou malignest the goodnesse of God. It troubles thee, it seems, that God hath a heart to do good to any besides thy selfe: thy eye is evil, because his is good. Wouldest not thou have God be good? you had as good speak out and say, you would not have him God, he can as soon cease to be God as to be good.

Thirdly, thou art an enemy to the glory of God, as thou defacest that which should set it forth. Every gift is a ray of divine excellency: and as all the beams declare the glory of the Sunne, so all the gifts God imparts declare the glory of God: Now envy labours to deface and sully the representations of God; it hath ever something to disparage the excellency of another withal. God shewed *Miriam* her sin by her punishment, she went to be-spatter *Moses*, that shone so eminently with the gifts and graces of God, and God spits in her face, *Numb. 12.* yea, fills her all over with a noisome scab. Dost thou cordially wish well to the honour of God? why then hangest thou thy head, and dost not rather rejoyce to see him glorified by the gifts of others? Could a *Heathen* take it so well, when himself was passed by, and others chosen to places of honour and government, that he said, he was glad his City could finde so many more worthy then himself? and shall a Christian repine that any are found fit to honour God besides himself?

Secondly, thou wrongest thy brother, as thou sinnest against the law of love, which obligeth thee to rejoyce in his good as thy own, yea, to prefer him in honour before thy self. Thou canst not love and envy the same person; envy is as contrary to love, as the hectical feavourish fire in the body, is to the kindly

heat of nature. *Charity envieth not.* 1 Cor. 13. How can it when it lives where it loves? and when thou ceasest to love, thou beginnest to hate and kill him, and doest not thou tremble to be found a murderer at last?

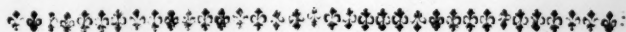
3. Thirdly, thou consultest worst of all for thy self. God is out of thy reach, what thou spittest against heaven, thou art sure to have fall on thy own face at last, and thy brother whom thou enviest, God stands bound to defend him against thy envie, because he is maligned for what he hath of God in him. Thus did God plead *Josephs* cause against his envious brethren, and *Dauids* against wicked *Saul*. Thy self only hast real hurt.

1. First, thou deprivest thy self of what thou mightest reap from the gifts of others. That old saying is true, *Tolle invidiam, mea tua sunt, & tua mea*: What thou hast is mine, and what I have thine; when envy is gone. Whereas now, like the leach (which they say draws out the worst blood) thou suckest nothing, but what swells thy minde with discontent, and is after vomited out in strife and contention. O what a sad thing is it, that one should go from a precious Sermon, a sweet prayer, and bring nothing away but a grudge against the instrument God used; as we see in the Pharisees and others at Christ preaching.

2. Secondly, thou robbest thy self of the joy of thy life; *He that is cruel troubles his own flesh*, Prov. 11. 17. The envious man doth it to purpose, he sticks the honour and esteem of others as thornes in his own heart, he cannot think of them without paine and anguish, and he must needs pine that is ever in paine.

3. Thirdly, thou throwest thy self into the mouth of temptation, thou needest give the devil no greater advantage; it is a stalk any sin almost will grow upon. What will not the Patriarchs do to rid their hands of *Joseph* whom they envied? that very pride which made them disdain the thought of bowing to his sheaf, made them stoop far lower, even to debase themselves as low as he, and be the devils instruments to sell their dear brother into slavery, which might have been worse to him (if God had not provided otherwise) then if they had slain him on the place. What an impotent minde and cruel did *Saul* shew against *David*, when once envy had envenomed his heart? from that

that day which he heard *David* preferr'd in the womens Songs above himself, he could never get that sound out of his head, but did ever after devote this innocent man to death in his thoughts, who had done him no other wrong, but in being an instrument to keep the crown on his head, by the hazard of his own life with *Goliath*. O it is a bloody sinne. It is the wombe wherein a whole litter of other finnes are formed, *Rom. 1. 29.* full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, &c. and therefore except you be resolved to bid the devil welcome and his whole train, resist him in this, that comes before to take up quarters for the rest.



CHAP. X.

Of pride of Grace.

SEcondly, pride of grace. This is another way Satan assaults the Christian. 'Tis true, grace cannot be proud, yet 'tis possible a Saint may be proud of his grace, there is nothing the Christian hath or doth, but this worne of pride will breed in it. The world we live in is corruptible, and all here is subject to putrifie, as things kept in a rasty muggish room, subject them to mould. It is not the nature of grace, but the salt of the Covenant keeps and preserves the purity of it; in heaven indeed we shall be safe. But how can a Saint be said to be proud of his grace? Then a soul is proud of his grace, when he trusts in his grace. Trust and confidence is an incommunicable flower of Gods Crown as Sovereign Lord, even among men it goes along with royalty. Set up a King, and as such he expects you, should give him this, as the undoubted Prerogative of his place, and therefore to seek protection from any other, is (as it were, to set up another King. *Judg. 9. 15.* *If indeed you anoint me King over you, then come and put your trust under my shadow;* therefore when a soul puts his trust in any thing beside God, he

sets up a Prince, a King, an Idol, to which he gives Gods glory away. Now it doth not make the sin lesse, that it is the grace of God we crown, then if it were a lust we crowned. 'Tis idolatry to worship a holy Angel as well as a cursed devil, to make our grace a god, as well as our belly our god; nay, rather it addes to it, because that is now used to rob him of his glory, which should have brought him in the greatest revenue of glory; certainly the more treasure you put into your servants hands, the greater wrong to you for him to run away with it. I doubt not but *David* could have borne it better to have seen a Philistine drive him from his throne then a sonne, an *Abissalom*. But how can or may a Saint be said to trust in his grace?

First, by trusting on the strength of his grace.

Secondly, by trusting on the worth of his grace. Indeed a professed trust in grace, I conceive, cannot stand with grace: but there is an oblique kinde of trust, or that which by interpretation may favour of it. Satan is sle in his assaults.

SECT. I.

- I. First, of the first, to trust in the strength of grace, is to be proud of grace. This is opposed to that poverty of spirit so commended by our Saviour, *Matth. 5.* by which a man lives in the continual sense of his spiritual beggery and nothingnesse, and so hath his recourse to Christ, as the poor to the rich mans door, knowing he hath nothing at home to maintain him. Such a one was *Paul*, not able to do any thing of himself; he is not ashamed to let the world know that Christ carries his purse for him. *Our sufficiency is of God*, yea, after many years trading, this holy man sees nothing he hath got, *Phil. 3. 13.* *I count not my self to have apprehended*: he is still pressing forward: ask him how he lives, he'll tell you who keeps house for him; *I live, yet not I*, *Gal. 2. 20.* as ask a beggar where he hath his meat, cloathes, &c. he'll say, *I thank my good Master*; Now Satan chiefly labours to puffe the soul up with an over-weening conceit of his own ability, as the readiest means to bring him into his snare; Satan knows 'tis Gods method to give his children into

into his hands, when once they grow proud and self-confident. *Hezekiah* was left to a temptation, *2 Chron. 32. 31. to try him.* Why? God had tried him to purpose a little before in an affliction; what needs this? O *Hezekiah's* heart was lift up after his affliction. It was time for God to let the tempter alone a little to foile him; probably now *Hezekiah* had high thoughts of his grace; O he would never do as he had done before, and God will let him see what a weak creature he is. *Peter* makes a whip for his own back in that bravado; *Though all should forsake thee, yet will not I.* Christ now in meer mercy must set Satan on him to lay him on his back; that seeing the weaknesse of his faith, he might be dismounted from the height of his pride. All that I shall say from this, is to entreat thee (*Christiana*) to have a care of this kind of pride. You know what *Joab* said to *David*, when he perceived his heart lift up with the strength of his Kingdom, and therefore would have the people numbered: *The Lord God adde unto thy people, how many soever they be, a hundred fold; but why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing?* *2 Sam. 24. 3.* The Lord adde to the strength of thy grace a hundred fold; but why delightest thou in this? why shouldst thou be lift up? is it not grace? shall the Groom be proud because he rides on his Masters horse? or the mud-wall because the Sun shines on it? mayest thou not say of every dram of grace, as the young man of his hatchet, *Alas, Master, it is borrowed?* nay, not only borrowed, but thou canst not use it without his skill and strength that lends it thee. O beware of this, let not those vain thoughts lodge in thee, lest thou enter into temptation. It is a breach a whole troop of sins may enter at, yea, will, except speedily ill'd up.

First, it will make thee soon grow loose and negligent in thy duty. 'Tis sense of insufficiency keeps a soul at work, to pray and hear, as want in the house and hutch holds up the market, no man comes thither to buy what he hath at home. Up, saith *Jacob*, go down to Egypt for corn, that we live and not die. Thus saith the needy Christian, Up soul to thy God, thy faith is weak, thy patience almost spent, ply thee to the throne of grace, go with thy homer to the Ordinances, and get some supplies. Now a soul conceited of his store, hath another song; *Soul, take thine ease, thou art richly laid in for many dayes.* Let the doubt-

ing soule pray, thy faith is strong; let the weak lie at the breast, thou art well grown up; nay, 'tis well if it goes not further; to a despising of Ordinances, except they have some more courtly fare then ordinary: such a Passé were the *Corinthians* come to, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye reign like Kings without us.* I pray observe how he layes the accent on the particle *now*; now ye are rich, as if he had said, I knew the time, if *Paul* had been come to town, and newes spread abroad in the City that *Paul* was to preach, you would have flock't to hear him, and blessed God for the season, but then you were poor and empty; now ye are full, you have got to a higher attainment; *Paul* is a plain fellow now, he may carry his cheere to a hungry people if he will, we are well apaid. And when once the heart is come to this, 'tis easie to judge what will follow.

Secondly, this trusting to the strength of grace will make the soule bold and venturous. The humble Christian is the wary Christian, he knows his weaknesse, and this makes him afraid. I have a weak head, saith he, I may be soon disputed into an error and heresie, and therefore I dare not come where such stuffe is broach't, lest my weak head should be intoxicated: the confident man he'll sip of every cup, he fears none; no, he is stablish't in the truth, a whole team of hereticks shall not draw him aside. I have a vain light heart, saith the humble soul; I dare not come among wicked debauch't company, lest I should at last bring the naughty man home with me: but one trusting to the strength of his grace, dares venture into the devils quarters. Thus *Peter* into the rout of Christs enemies, and how he came off, you know; there his faith had been slain on the place, had not Christ founded a retreat, by the seasonable look of love he gave him. Indeed I have read of some bragging Philosophers, who did not think it enough to be temperate, except they had the object for intemperance present; and therefore they would go into Taverns and Whore-houses, as if they meant to beat the devil on his own ground; but the Christian knows an enemy nearer then so, wh ch they were ignorant of; and that he need not go over his own threshold to challenge the devil. He hath lust in his bosome, that will be hard enough for him all his days, without giving it the vantage-ground. Christian, I know no sin,
but

but thou mayst be left to commit it, except one. It was a bold speech of him, and yet a good man, (as I have heard) If *Clapham* die of the plague, say *Clapham* had no faith, and this made him boldly go among the infected. If a Christian, thou shalt not die of spiritual plagues, yet such may have the plague sores of grosse sins running on them for a time, and is not this sad enough? therefore walk humbly with thy God.

Thirdly, this high conceit of the strength of thy grace will make thee cruel and churlish to thy weak brethren in their infirmities, a sin that least becomes a Saint, *Gal. 6.1. If any one be overtaken, you that be spiritual, restore such a one with meeknesse*: but how shall a soul get such a meek spirit? It follows, *considering thy self, I st thou also be tempted*. What makes men hard to the poor? they think they shall never be so themselves? Why are many so sharp in their censures, but because they trust too much to their grace, as if they could never fall? O you are in the body, and the body of sin in you, therefore feare. *Bernard* used to say, when he heard any scandalous sin of a Professor, *Hodie illi, cras mihi*. He fell to day, I may stumble tomorrow.

3.

SECT. II.

The second way a soule may be proud of his grace, is, by resting on it for his acceptance with God. The Scripture calls inherent grace *our own righteousness*, (though God indeed be the efficient of it) and opposeth it to the righteousness of Christ, which alone is called *the Righteousnesse of God*, *Rom. 10. 1*. Now to rest on any grace inherent, is to exalt our own righteousness above the righteousness of God: and what pride will this amount to? If this were so, then a Saint when he comes to heaven might say, This is heaven which I have built, my grace hath purchased, and thus the God of Heaven should become tenant to his creature in heaven. No, God hath cast the order of our salvation into another method, of grace, but not of grace in us, but grace to us. Inherent grace hath its place and office to accompany salvation, *Heb. 6. 9*, but not procure it. This is Christs

2.

work not graces. When *Israel* waited on the Lord at Mount *Sinai*, they had their bounds, not a man must come up besides *Moses* to treat with God; no, not touch the Mount, lest they die: thus all the graces of the Spirit wait on God, but none come up to challenge any acceptance of God besides faith, which is a grace that presents the soul not in its own garments. But you will say, what needs all this? where is the man that trusts in his grace? Alas, where is the Christian that doth fully stand clear, and freely come off his own righteousness? he is a rare Pilot indeed, that can steere his faith in so direct a course, as not now and then to knock upon this duty, and run on ground upon that grace. *Abraham* went in to *Hagar*, and the children of *Abraham's* faith are not perfectly dead to the Law, and may be found sometimes in *Hagar's* armes, witnesse the fluxe and reflux of our faith, according to the various aspect of our obedience: when this seems full, then our faith is at a spring-tide, and covers all the mountains of our fears, but let it seem to wain in any service or duty, then the *Jordan* of our faith flies back, and leaves the soul naked. The devils spight is at Christ, and therefore, since he could not hinder his landing, which he endeavoured all he could, nor work his will on his person, when he was come; he goes now in a more refined way to darken the glory of his sufferings, and the sufficiency of his righteousness, by blending ours with his; this doctrine of Justification by faith, hath had more works and batteries made against it, then any other in the Scripture. Indeed many other errors were but his slie approaches to get nearer to undermine this; and lastly, when he cannot hide this truth, (which now shines in the Church like the Sun in its strength) then he labours to hinder the practical improvement of it, that we (if he can help it) shall not live up to our own principles, making us at the same time, that in our judgement we professe acceptance only through Christ, in our practice confute our selves. Now there is a double pride in the soul he makes use of for this end, the one I may call a mannerly pride, the other a self applauding pride.

First, a mannerly pride, which comes forth in the habit and guise of humility, and that discovers it self, either at the soules first coming to Christ, and keeps him from closing with the promise, or afterward in the daily course of a Christians walking

ing with God, which keeps him from comfortable living on Christ.

First, when a poor soul is staved off the promise by the sense of his own unworthinesse and great unrighteousnesse; tell him of a pardon, alas, he is so wrapt up with the thoughts of his own vilenesse, that you cannot fasten it upon him. What, will God ever take such a toad as he is into his bosome, discount so many great abominations at once, and receive him into his favour, that hath been so long in rebellious armes against him? he cannot believe it, no, though he heares what Christ hath done and suffered for sin, he refuseth to be comforted. Little doth the soul think what a bitter root such thoughts spring from, thou thinkest thou doest well, thus to declaim against thy self, and aggravate thy sins: indeed thou canst not paint them black enough, or entertain too low and base thoughts of thy selfe for them: But what wrong hath God and Christ done thee, that thou shouldest so unworthily reflect upon the mercy of the one, and merit of the other? Mayest thou not do this, and be tender of the good Name of God also? Is there no way to shew thy sense of thy sin, except thou asperse thy Saviour? Canst thou not charge thy self, but thou must condemn God, and put Christ and his blood to shame before Satan, who triumphs more in this then all thy other sins? In a word, though thou like a wretch hast undone thy self, and damned thy soul by thy sins, yet art thou not willing God should have the glory of pardoning them, and Christ the honour of procuring the same? or art thou like him in the Gospel, *Luke 16. 3. who could not dig, and to beg was ashamed?* Thou canst not earne heaven by thy own righteousness, and is thy spirit so stout that thou wilt not beg it for Christs sake? yea, take it at Gods hands, who in the Gospel comes a begging to thee, and beseecheth thee to be reconciled to him? Ah soule, who would ever have thought there could have lien such pride under such a modest veile? and yet none like it. 'Tis horrible pride for a beggar to starve, rather then take an alms at a rich mans hands: a malefactor rather to choose his halter then a pardon from his gracious Princes hand: but here is one infinitely surpassing both; a soule pining and perishing in sin, and yet rejecting the mercy of God, and the helping hand of Christ to save him. Though *Abigail* did not

think her self worthy to be *David's* wife, yet she thought *David* was worthy of her, and therefore she humbly accepted his offer, and makes haste to go with the messengers: That's the sweet frame of heart indeed, to lie low in the sense of your own vilenesse, yet to believe; to renounce all conceit of worthinesse in our selves, yet not therefore to renounce all hope of mercy, but the more speedily to make haste to Christ that woos us. All the pride and unmannerlinesse lies in making Christ stay for us, who bids his messengers invite poor sinners to come and tell them *all things are ready*. But may be thou wilt say still, it is not pride that keeps thee off, but thou canst not beleeve that ever God will entertain such as thou art. Truly, thou mendest the matter but little with this, either thou keepest some lust in thy heart, which thou wilt not part with to obtain the benefit of the promise, and then thou art a notorious hypocrite, who under such an out-cry for thy sins, canst drive a secret trade with hell at the same time; or if not so, thou doest discover the more pride, in that thou darest stand out, when thou hast nothing to oppose against the many plain and clear promises of the Gospel, but thy peremptory unbelief. God bids the wicked forsake his wayes, and turne to him, and he will abundantly pardon him; but thou sayest thou canst not believe this for thy own self. Now who speaks the truth? One of you two must be the liar, either thou must take it with shame to thy self, for what thou hast said against God and his Promise, (and that is thy best course,) or thou must proudly, yea, blasphemously cast it upon God, as every unbeliever doth, *1 John 5. 10*. Nay, thou makest him forsworn, for God, to give poor sinners the greater security, in flying for refuge to Christ, who is that *hope set before them*, *Heb. 6. 17, 18*. hath sworn they should have strong consolation: *O beatos, quorum causa Deus jurat! O miserrimos, si nec juranti credamus*. Tertul. de poenit. O happy we, for whose sake God puts himself under an Oath: but O miserable we, who will not beleeve God, no, not when he swears!

Secondly, when the soul hath shot the great gulf, and got into a state of peace and life by closing with Christ, yet this mannerly pride Satan makes use of in the Christians daily course of duty and obedience, to disturb him and hinder his peace and comfort. O how uncheerfully, yea, joylessly do many precious souls

soules passe their dayes ! If you enquire what is the cause, you shall find all their joy runs out at the crannies of their imperfect duties and weak graces ; they cannot pray as they would, and walk as they desire with evennesse and constancy ; they see how short they fall of the holy rule in the Word, and the pattern which others more eminent in grace do set before them, and this though it doth not make them throw the Promises away, and quite renounce all hope in Christ, yet it begets many sad feares and suspicions, yea, makes them sit at the Feast Christ hath provided, and not know whether they may eat or not. In a word, as it robs them of their joy, so Christ of that glory which he should receive from their rejoycing in him. I do not say (Christian) thou oughtest not to mourn for those defects thou findest in thy graces and duties, nay, thou couldest not approve thy self to be sincere, if thou didst not. A gracious heart, seeing how far short his renewed state (for the present) falls of mans primitive holinesse by Creation, cannot but weep and mourn (as the Jewes to behold the second Temple,) yet (Christian) even while the tears are in thy eyes for thy imperfect graces, (for a soule riseth with his grave-clothes on) thou shouldest rejoyce, yea, triumph over all these thy defects by faith in Christ, *in whom thou art compleat*, Col. 1.10. while imperfect in thy selfe. Christs Presence in the second Temple, (which the first had not) made it (though comparatively mean) more glorious then the first, Hag. 2.9. how much more doth his Presence in this spiritual temple of a gracious heart, imputing his righteousness to cover all its uncomelineffe, make the soul glorious above man at first ? This is a garment for which (as Christ saith of the lillie) we neither spin nor toile ; yet Adam in all his created royalty was not so clad, as the weakest believer is with this on his soul. Now, Christian, consider well what thou doest, while thou sittest languishing under the sense of thy own weaknesses, and refuseth to rejoyce in Christ, and live comfortably on the sweet priviledges thou art interessed in by thy marriage to him. Doeest thou not bewray some of this spiritual pride working in thee ? O, if thou couldest pray without wandering, walk without limping, believe without wavering, then thou couldest rejoyce and walk chearfully. It seems, soule, thou stayest to bring the ground of thy comfort with thee, and not to receive it pure-

ly from Christ. O how much better were it if thou wouldst say with *David*, *Though my house, my heart, be not so with God, yet he hath made with me a Covenant ordered in all things and sure*; and this is all my desire, all my confidence; Christ I oppose to all my sins, Christ to all wants, he is my all in all, and all above all. Indeed all those complaints of our wants and weaknesses, so far as they withdraw our hearts from relying cheerfully on Christ, they are but the language of pride banking after the Covenant of works. O'tis hard to forget our mother-tongue, which is so natural to us, labour therefore to be sensible of it, how grievous it is to the Spirit of Christ. What would a husband say, if his wife instead of expressing her love to him, and delight in him, should day and night do nothing but weep and cry to think of her former husband that is dead? The Law (as a Covenant) and Christ are compared to two husbands, *Rom. 7.4. Ye are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead*. Now thy sorrow for the defect of thy own righteousness, when it hinders thy rejoicing in Christ, is but a whining after thy other husband, and this Christ cannot but take unkindly, that thou art not well pleased to lie in the bosome of Christ, and have thy happiness from him as with your old husband the Law.

2. Secondly, a self-applauding pride, when the heart is secretly lift up, so as to promise it-self acceptance at Gods hands, for any duty or act of obedience it performs, and doth not, when most assisted, go out of his own doings, to lay the weight of his expectation entirely upon Christ; every such glance of the soules eye is adulterous, yea, idolatrous. If thy heart, Christian, at any time be secretly enticed, (as *Job* saith of another kinde of idolatry) or thy mouth doth kisse thy hand, that is, dote so farre on thy own duties or righteousness, as to give them this inward worship of thy confidence and trust, this is a great iniquity indeed; for in this thou deniest the God that is above, who hath determined thy faith to another object. Thou comest to open heaven-gate with the old key, when God hath set on a new lock: Dost thou not acknowledge that thy first entrance into thy justified state was of pure mercy? thou wert justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in *Jesus Christ*,

Christ, Rom. 7. 24. And whom art thou beholden to, now thou art reconciled for thy further acceptance in every duty or holy action? to thy duty, thy obedience, thy self, or Christ? The same Apostle will tell you, *Rom. 5. 2. By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.* If Christ should not lead thee in and all thou doest, thou art sure to finde the door shut upon thee: there is no more place for desert now thou art gracious, then when thou wert gracelesse, *Rom. 1. 17. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, for the just shall live by faith.* We are not only made alive by Christ, but we live by Christ; faith sucks in continual pardoning, assisting, comforting mercy from him, as the lungs suck in the aire. Heaven-way is paved with grace and mercy to the end.

Be exhorted above all, to watch against this play of Satan, *Use.* beware thou retest not in thy own righteousness: thou standest under a tottering wall, the very cracks thou seest in thy graces and duties, when best, bid thee stand off, except thou wouldest have them fall on thy head; the greatest step to heaven, is out of our own doors, over our own threshold. It hath cost many a man his life when his house on fire, a grippleness to save some of the stuffe, which venturing among the flames to preserve, they have perished themselves; more have lost their soules by thinking to carry some of their own stuffe with them to heaven. Such a good work or duty, while they, like lingring *Lot*, have been loath to leave in point of confidence, have themselves perisht. O Sirs, come out, come out, leave what is your own in the fire, flie to Christ naked, he hath cloathing for you better then your own: poor to Christ, and he hath gold, not like thine, which will consume and be found drossy in the fire, but such as hath in the fiery trial past in Gods righteous judgment for pure and full weight; you cannot be found in two places at once, choose whether you will be found in your own righteousness, or in Christs. Those who have had more to shew then thy selfe, have thrown away all, and gone a begging to Christ. Reade *Pauls* inventory, *Phil. 3.* what he had, what he did, yet all drosse and losse: give him Christ, and take the rest who will. So *Joh*, as holy a man as trod on earth, (God himself being witness) yet saith; *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soule, I would despise my life.* He had acknowledged his imperfection, *Job 9. 11.*

perfection before, now he makes a supposition, (indeed *quod non est supponendum* :) If I were perfect, yet would I not know my own foule; I would not entertain any such thoughts as should puffe me up into such a confidence of my holinesse, as to make it my plea with God, like to our common phrase, We say, such a one hath excellent parts, but he knows it, that is, he is proud of it: Take heed of knowing thy own grace in this sense, thou canst not give a greater wound both to thy grace and comfort, then by thus priding thy self in it.

SECT. III.

- I. First, thy grace cannot thrive so long as thou thus rekest on it: A legal spirit is no friend to grace, nay, a bitter enemy against it, as appeared by the Pharisees in Christs time. Grace comes not by the Law, but by Christ; thou mayest stand long enough by it, before thou gettest any life of grace into thy soule, or further life into thy grace. If thou wouldest have this, thou must set thy self under Christs wings by faith; from his Spirit in the Gospel alone comes this kindly natural heat to hatch thy soul to the life of holinesse, and encrease what thou hast, and thou canst not come under Christs wings, till thou comest from under the shadow of the other, by renouncing all expectation from thy own works and services. You know *Reubens* curse, that he should not excel, because he went up into his fathers bed; when other tribes encreased, he stood at a little number. By trusting in thy own works thou doest worse by Christ, and shalt thou excel in grace! Perhaps some of you have been long Professours, and yet come to little growth in love to God, humility, heavenly-mindednesse, mortification, and 'tis worth the digging to see what lies at the root of your Profession, whether there be not a legal principle that hath too much acted you. Have you not thought to carry all with God from your duties and services, and too much laid up your hopes in your own actings? Alas, this is as so much dead earth, which must be thrown out, and Gospel-principles laid in the room thereof; try but this course, and see whether the spring of thy grace will not come on apace. *David* gives an account how he came to stand and flourish, when some that

that were rich and mighty, on a sudden withered and came to nothing. *Lo, (saith he) this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches. But I am like a green Olive-tree in the House of God; I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever, Psal. 52. 7, 8.* While others trust in the riches of their own righteousness and services, and make not Christ their strength, do thou renounce all, and trust in the mercy of God in Christ, and thou shalt be like a green olive when they fade and wither.

Secondly, Christian, you will not thrive in true comfort so long as you rest in any inherent work of grace, and do not stand clear of your own actings and righteousness. Gospel-comfort springs from a Gospel-root, which is Christ, *Phil. 3. 3. We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* Now a soul that rests on any holiness in himself, he grafts his comfort upon himself, not Christ; he sucks his own breath, not Christ; and so makes Christ a dry nurse: and what comfort can grow on that dry tree? The Spirit is our Comforter as well as our Teacher and Counsellour. Now as the Spirit when he teacheth, comes not with any new or strange truth, but takes of Christ's own; (what he findes in the Word) so where he comforts, he takes of Christ's own, his righteousness, not our own? Christ is the matter and ground of his comfort; all cordials are but Christ distill'd, and made up in several promises: his acting, not ours, his suffering, not ours; his holiness, not ours; he doth not say, Soul, rejoyce, thou art holy; but, Soul, triumph, Christ is righteous, and, *is the Lord thy righteousness;* Not, Soul, thou prayest sweetly, feare not; but thou hast an Advocate with the Father, Christ the righteous: so that the first step to the receiving of comfort from the Spirit, is to send away all Comforters of our own. As in learning of the Spirit, he that will be taught by him, must first become a fool, (that is, no way lean to his own understanding,) so he that would be comforted, must first be emptied of all self-supports; must not lean to his owne comforts. As a Physician first bids his Patient cast off all others he hath tampered with, he asks what Physick he hath had from them, takes off their plaisters, throws away their physick, and goes about the work *de novo*: So the Spirit when he comes

to comfort a poor soul; First perswades the soul to send away all its old Physicians: O, saith the soul, I have been in the hand of such a duty, such a course of obedience, and have thought sure, now I shall be well, and have comfort now I do this duty, set upon such a holy course. Well, saith the Spirit, if you will have me do any thing, these must all be dismiss in point of confidence. Now, and not till now, is the soule a subject fit to receive the spirits comforts. And therefore, friends, as you love your inward peace, beware what vessel you draw your comfort from. Grace is finite, and so cannot afford much. 'Tis leaking, and so cannot hold long; thou drinkest in a riven dish, that hast thy comfort from thy grace. 'Tis mixt, and so weak; and weak grace cannot give strong consolation, and such thou needest, especially in strong conflicts; Nay lastly, thy comfort which thou drawest from it, is stollen, thou doest not come honestly by it; and stollen comforts will not thrive with thee. Oh, what folly is it for the childe to play the thief for that which he may have freely and more fully from his Father, who gives and reproacheth not? that comfort which thou wouldest filch out of thy own righteousness and duties: behold, it is laid up for thee in Christ, from whose fulnesse thou mayest carry as much as thy faith can hold, and none to check thee, yea, the more thou improvest Christ for thy comfort, the more heartily welcome; we are bid to *open our mouth wide, and he will fill it.*



CHAP. XI.

The third kinde of spiritual pride, viz. pride of Priviledges.

THe third kinde of pride, (spiritual pride I mean) is pride of Priviledges, with which these wicked spirits labour to blow up the Christian: To name three,

First, when God calls a person to some eminent place, or useth him to do some special piece of service.

1.

Secondly, when God honours a Saint to suffer for his truth or cause.

2.

Thirdly, when God flows in with more then ordinary manifestations of his love, and fills the soul with joy and comfort. These are Priviledges not equally dispensed to all, and therefore where they are, Satan takes the advantage of assaulting such with pride.

3.

SECT. I.

First, when God calls a person to some eminent place, or useth him to do some special piece of service: Indeed it requires a great measure of grace to keep the heart low, when the man stands high. The Apostle speaking how a Minister of the Gospel should be qualified, 1 Tim. 3.6. saith, he must not be a Novice, or a young Convert, lest he should be lift up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil; as if he had said, this calling is honourable: if he be not well ballast with humility, a little gust from Satan will tople him into this sin: The Seventy that Christ first sent out to preach the Gospel, and prevailed so miraculously over Satan, even these while they trod on the Serpents head, he turn'd again, and had like to have stung them with pride, which our Saviour perceived, when they return'd in triumph, and told what great miracles they had wrought, and therefore he takes

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Luke 10. 12.

them off that glorying, lest it should degenerate into vain glory, and bids them *not rejoyce that devils were subject to them, but rather that their names were writ in Heaven.* As if he had said, It is not the honour of your calling, and successe of your Ministry will save you; there shall be some cast to the devils, who shall then say, *Lord, Lord, in thy name we have cast out devils;* and therefore value not your selves by that, but rather evidence to your soules, that ye are of mine elect ones, which will stand you more in stead at the great day then all this.

SECT II.

A second Priviledge is, when God honours a person to suffer for his truth, this is a great Priviledge. *Unto you it is given not only to believe, but to suffer for his sake.* God doth not use to give worthlesse gifts to his Saints, there is some preciousnesse in it, which a carnal eye cannot see. Faith you will say is a great gift, but perseverance greater, without which faith would be little worth, and perseverance in suffering, this above both honourable; This made *John Carelesse*, our English Martyr, (who though he died not at the stake, yet in prison for Christ) say, Such an honour 'tis, as Angels are not permitted to have, therefore God forgive me mine unthankfulnesse. Now when Satan cannot scare a soul from prison, yet then he will labour to puffe him up in prison; when he cannot make him pity himself, then he will flatter him till he prides in himself, Affliction from God exposteth to impatience, affliction for God, to pride. And therefore (Christians) labour to fortifie your selves against this temptation of Satan, how soon you may be called to suffering work you know not, such clouds oft are not long arising: Now to keep thy heart humble when thou art honoured to suffer for the truth; Consider,

First, though thou dost not deserve those sufferings at mans hand, (thou canst and mayest in that regard glory in thy innocency, thou sufferest not as an evil-doer) yet thou canst not but confesse it is a just affliction from God in regard of sin in thee, and this me thinks should keep thee humble; the same suffering may be Martyrdome in regard of man, and yet a fatherly chastising

stifling for sin in regard of God : none suffered without sin but Christ, and therefore none may glory in them but he ; Christ in his own, we in his; *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Crosse of Christ*, Gal. 6. This kept Mr. Bradford humble in his sufferings for the truth, none more rejoyced in them and blessed God for them, yet none more humble under them then he, and what kept him in this humble frame ? reade his godly letters, and you shall finde almost in all how he bemoans his sins, and the sins of the Protestants under the reign of King Edward: *It was time* (saith he) *for God to put his rod into the Papists hands, we were grown so proud, formal, unfruitful, yea, to loath and despise the means of grace, when we enjoyed the liberty thereof, and therefore God hath brought the wheel of persecution on us.* As he look't at the honour to make him thankful, so to sinne to keep him humble.

Secondly, consider who bears thee up, and carries thee through thy sufferings for Christ : Is it thy grace, or his that is sufficient for such a work ? thy spirit, or Christs, by which thou speakest, when call'd to bear witness to his truth ? how comes it to passe thou art a sufferer, and not a Persecutour ? a confessor, and not a denier ? yea, betrayer of Christ and his Gospel ? This thou owest for to God ; he is not beholden to thee. that thou wilt part with estate, credit, or life it self for his sake. If thou hadst a thousand lives, thou wouldest owe them all to him : but thou art beholden to God exceedingly, that he will call for these in this way, which has such an honour and reward attending it. He might have suffered thee to live in thy lusts, and at last to suffer the losse of all these for them. O how many die at the Gallows as Martyrs in the devils cause, for felonies, rapes and murders ! Or he might with-draw his grace, and leave thee to thy own cowardise and unbelief, and then thou wouldest soon shew thy self in thy colours. The stoutest Champions for Christ, have been taught how weak they are if Christ steps aside. Some that have given great testimony of their faith and resolution in Christs cause, even to come so near dying for his Name, as to give themselves to be bound to the stake, and fire to be kindled upon them, yet then their hearts have failed, as that holy man Mr. Benbridge in our *English Martyr*. who thrust the faggots from him, and cried out, *I recant, I recant.* Yet this man, when

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re-inforc't in his faith, and endued with power from above, was able within the space of a week after that sad foile, to die at the stake cheerfully: *Qui pro nobis mortem semel vicit, semper in nobis vincit*: He that once overcame death for us, 'tis he that alwayes overcame death in us. And who should be thy Song, but he that is thy strength? applaud not thy selfe, but blesse him. 'Tis one of Gods Names, he is call'd the *glory of his peoples strength*, Psal. 89. 17. The more thou gloriest in God that gives thee strength to suffer for him, the lesse thou wilt boast of thy self: A thankful heart and a proud cannot dwell together in one bosome.

Thirdly, consider what a foule blot pride gives to all thy sufferings, where it is not bewailed and resisted, it alters the case. The old saying is, that 'tis not the punishment, but the cause makes the Martyr; we may safely say further, it is not barely the cause, but the sincere frame of the heart in suffering for a good cause, that makes a man a Martyr in Gods sight. Though thou shouldst give thy body to be burnt, if thou hast not an humble heart of a sufferer for Christ, thou turnest Merchant for thy self. Thou deniest but one self to set up another, runnest the hazard of thy estate and life to gain some applause, may be, and reare up a monument to thy honour in the opinions of men; thou doest no more in this case then a souldier, who for a name of valour will venture into the mouth of death and danger, only thou shewest thy pride under a religious disguise, but that helps it not, but makes it the worse. If thou wilt in thy sufferings be a sacrifice acceptable to God, thou must not only be ready to offer up thy life for his truth, but sacrifice thy pride also, or else thou mayst tumble out of one fire into another, suffer here from man, as a seeming champion for the Gospel, and in another world from God, for robbing him of his glory in thy sufferings.

SECT. III.

3. A third priviledge is, when God flowes in with more then ordinary manifestations of his love, then the Christian is in danger of having his heart secretly lift up in pride. Indeed the genuine and natural effect, which such discoveries of divine love have

have on a gracious soule, is to humble it. The sight of mercy encreaseth the sense of sin, and that sense dissolves the soul kindly into sorrow, as we see in *Magdalen*. The heart which possibly was hard and frozen in the shade, will give and thaw in the Sun-shine of love, and so long all pride is hid from the creatures eye. Then (saith God) *Ezek. 36. 31. Ye shall remember your wayes, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath yourselves in your own sight, &c.* And when shall this be? but when God would save them from all their uncleanneses, as appears v. 25. yet notwithstanding this, there remain such dregs of corruption unpurged out of the best, that Satan finds it not impossible, to make the manifestations of Gods love an occasion of pride to the Christian: and truly God lets us see our pronenesse to this sin in the short stay he makes, when he comes with any greater discoveries of his love. The Comforter ('tis true) abides for ever in the Saints bosome, but his joys, they come and are gone again quickly. They are as exceedings, with which he feasts the believer, but the cloth is soon drawn, and why so, but because we cannot bear them for our every day food? A short interview of heaven, and a vision of love now and then upon the mount of an ordinance or affliction cheeres the spirits of drooping Christians, who, might they have leave to build Tabernacles there, and dwell under a constant shine of such manifestations, would be prone to forget themselves, and think they were Lords of their own comforts. If holy *Paul* was in danger of falling into this distemper of pride from his short rapture, to prevent which God saw it needful to let him blood with a thorne in the flesh, would not our blood much more grow too rank, and we too crank and wanton, if we should feed long on such luscious food? And therefore, if ever (Christian) thou hadst need to watch, then is the time when comforts abound, and God dandles thee most on the knee of his love, when his face shines with clearest manifestations, lest this sin of pride (as a thief in the candle) should swaile out thy joy. To prevent which, thou shouldest do well; First, to look that thou measurest not thy grace by thy comfort, lest so thou beest led into a false opinion, that thy grace is strong, because thy comforts are so. Satan will be ready to help forward such thoughts as a fit medium to lift thee up, and slacken thy care in duty for the future. Such discoveries,

coveries do indeed bear witness to the truth of thy grace, but not to the degree and measure of it; the weak childe may be, yea, is oftner in the lap then the strong. Secondly, do not so much applaud thy self in thy present comfort, as labour to improve it for the glory of God. *Up and eate, saith the Angel to the Prophet, because the journey is too great for thee.* The manifestations of Gods love are to fit us for our work. It is one thing to reioyce in the light of our comfort, and another to go forth in the power of the Spirit comforting us, (as Giants refreshed with this wine,) to run our race of duty and obedience with more strength and alacrity. He shews his pride, that spends his time in telling his money meerly to see how rich he is; but he is wisdom, that layes out his money and trades with it. The boaster of his comforts will lose what he hath, when he that improves his comforts in a fuller trade of duty, shall adde more to what he hath. Thirdly, remember thou dependest on God for the continuance of thy comfort. They are not the smiles thou hadst yesterday can make thee joyous to day, any more then the bread thou didst then eate can make thee strong without more, thou needest new discoveries for new comforts: let God hide his face, and thou wilt soon lose the sight, and forget the taste of what thou even now hadst. It is beyond our skill or power to preserve those impressions of joy, and comfortable apprehensions of Gods favour on our spirits, which sometimes we finde; as Gods presence brings those, so when he goes he carries them away with him, as the setting-Sun doth the day. We would laugh heartily at him, who when the Sun shines in at his window, should think by shutting that to imprison the Sun-beams in his chamber; and dost thou not shew as much folly, who thinkest, because thou now hast comfort, thou therefore shalt never be in darknesse of spirit more? The believers comfort is like *Israels Manna*: 'tis not like our ordinary bread and provision we buy at market, and lock up in our Cup-boards where we can go to it when we will; no, it is rained, as that was from heaven. Indeed God provided for them after this sort to humble them, *Deut. 8. 16. Who fed thee in the wilderness with Manna which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee.* It was not because such mean food, that God is said to humble them, for it was delicious food, therefore call'd *Angels food*, *Psal.*

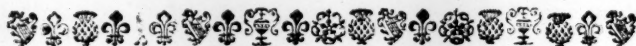
Pfal. 78. 25. Such as if Angels did eate, might serve them. But the manner of the dispensing it, from hand to mouth, every day their portion and no more, so that God kept the key of their Cupboard, they stood to his immediate allowance, and thus God communicates our spiritual comforts for the same end to humble us. So much for this second sort of spiritual wickednesse.

I had thought to have instanced in some other, as hypocrisie, unbelief, formality; but possibly the subject being general, what I have already said, may be thought but a digression, and that too long.

I shall therefore conclude this branch of *spiritual wickednesse*, in a word to those who are yet in a natural and un sanctified state, which is to stir them up from what I have said (concerning Satans assaulting believers with such temptations) to consider seriously, how that Satans chief designe against them also lies in the same sins. These are the wickednesses he labours to engulph you in above all others. If ever you perish, it will be by the hand of these sins. 'Tis your seared conscience, blind mind, and desolent impenitent heart, will be your undoing, if you miscarry finally. Other sins, the devil knows, are preparatory to these, and therefore he drawes thee into them to bring thee into these. Two wayes they prepare a way to spiritual sins, First, as they naturally dispose the sinner to them; 'tis the nature of sin to blinde the minde, stupifie the conscience, harden the heart, as is implied, *Heb. 3. 13. Lest your heart be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* As the feet of Travellers beat the high way hard, so does walking in carnal grosse sins the heart; they benumbe the conscience, so that in time the sinner loses his feeling, and can carry his lusts in his heart, (as Bedlams their pins in their very flesh) without paine and remorse. Secondly, as they do provoke God by a judiciary act to give them up to these sins, *Lam. 3. 65. Give them obstinacy of heart.* (so 'tis in your margin) *thy curse unto them:* and when the devil hath got sinners at this passe, then he hath them under lock and key. They are the fore-runners of damnation; if God leave thy heart hard and unbroken up, 'tis a sad signe he means not to sow the seed of grace there. O sinners pray (as he did request *Peter* for him,) that none of these things may come upon you, which

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that they may not, take heed thou rejectest not the offers he makes to soften thee. Gods hardening is a consequent of, and a punishment for our hardening our own hearts. 'Tis most true what Prosper saith, *Potest homo invitus amittere temporalia, non nisi volens, amittere spiritualia*: A man may lose temporals against his will, but not spirituals; God will harden none, damn none against their will.



CHAP. XII.

Sheweth what the Prize is, which believers wrestle against these Principalities, Powers and Spiritual wickednesses for.

In High Places.

SECT. I.

THese words contain the last branch in the description of our grand enemy, which have in them some ambiguity, the *Adjective* being only exprest in the Original; ἐν τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς, that is, in heavenlies; the phrase being defective, our Translators read it in high or heavenly places, as if the Apostle intended to set out the advantage of place, which this our enemy, by being above us hath of us. Indeed this way most Interpreters go, yet some both antient and modern reade the words not in heavenly places, but in *heavenly things*, interpreting the Apostles mind to set out the matter about which, or prize for which we wrestle with Principalities and Powers, *to be heavenly things*; Ἐν τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς, (saith *Oecumenius*,) is as much as if the Apostle had said, Ἐμὴν πάλιν ὁ πλεῖς μακρῶν πρῶν, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐν τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς πνευμάτων: We wrestle not for small and trivial things, but for hea-

venly, yea, for heaven it self, and our Adoption, as he goes on. The same way *Chrysostome* carries it, in *cœlestibus*, *id est*, *pro cœlestibus Dei*. And after him *Musculus*, and other modern Writers. The Reasons which are given for this Interpretation are weighty.

First, the word elsewhere indefinitely set down, is taken for things, not places, *Heb. 8. 5.* nay, one observes this word to be used almost twenty times in the New Testament, and never for any ærial place, but always for things truly heavenly and spiritual *; the word indeed properly signifies *supercelestial*, and if applied to places, would signifie that where the devil never came since his fall.

* See Dr. Gouge on the place,

Lastly, there seems no great argument to render Satan formidable by his being above us in place; 'tis some advantage indeed to men, to gain the hill, or be above their enemies in some place of strength, but none at all to spirits; but now take it of things, and then it addes weight to all the other branches of the description. We wrestle with Principalities and Powers, and spiritual wickednesse, and against all these, not for such toys and trifles as the earth affords, which are inconsiderable, whether to keep or lose, but for such as heaven holds forth, such an enemy, and such a prize makes it a matter of our greatest care, how to manage the combat. The word thus opened, the note will be this:

SECT. III.

The chief prize for which we wrestle against Satan is heavenly. Or thus, Satans main designe is to spoile and plunder the Christian of all that is heavenly; Indeed all the Christian hath, or desires as a Christian, is heavenly; The world is extrinsecal, both to his being and happinesse; It is a stranger to the Christian, and intermeddles not with his joy nor grief. Heap all the riches and honours of the world upon a man, they will not make him a Christian; heap them on a Christian, they will not make him a better Christian. Again, take them all away, let every bird have his feather, when stript and naked, he will still be

Doct.

a Christian, and may be a better Christian. It was a notable speech of *Erasmus*, if spoken in earnest, and his wit were not too quick for his conscience; *Nihil magis ambio opes & dignitates, quam elumbis equus gravis sarcinas*: He said he desired wealth and honour no more, then a feeble horse doth a heavy cloak-bag. And I think every Christian in his right temper would be of his minde. Satan should do the Saint little hurt, if he did bend his forces only or chiefly against his outward enjoyments; alas, the Christian doth not value them, or himself by them: this were as if one should think to hurt a man by beating of his clothes when he hath put them off. So far as the Spirit of grace prevails in the heart of a Saint, he hath put off the world in the desire of it, and joy in it; so that these blowes are not much felt: and therefore they are his heavenly treasures, which are the booty Satan waits for.

SECT. III.

1. First, the Christians nature is heavenly, borne from above; As Christ is the Lord from heaven, so all his off-spring are heavenly and holy: now Satans design is to debase and deflower this; 'tis the precious life of this new creature that he hunts for; he hath lost that beauty of holiness which once shone so gloriously on his Angelical nature, and now like a true Apostate, he endeavours to ruine that in the Christian which he hath lost himself. The seeds of this warre are sown in the Christians nature; you are holy, that he cannot endure; *Miles feri faciem*, was *Cæsars* speech, when to fight with the Roman Citizens, he bade his souldiers strike at their face; these Citizens (said he) love their beauty, marre that and marre all. The soul is the face whereon Gods image is stamp't: holiness is the beauty of this face, which makes us indeed like God, this, Satan knowes God loves, and the Saint is chary of; and therefore he labours to wound and disfigure this, that he may at once glory in the Christians shame, and poure contempt upon God in breaking his image; and is it not worth engaging limbe and life in battel against this enemy, who would rob us of that which makes us like God Himself? Have you forgot the bloody Articles of peace
that

that *Nabash* offered to the men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, no peace to be had, except they would let him thrust out their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all *Israel*, which how it was entertained, reade, *1 Sam. 11. 6*. The face is not so deformed that hath lost its eye, as the soule is that loseth its holiness; and no peace to be expected at Satans hands, except he may deprive us of this: Me thinks at the thought of this, the Spirit of the Lord should come upon the Christian, and his anger should be kindled much more against this cursed spirit, then *Sauls* and the men of *Israel* was against *Nabash*.

Secondly, the Christians trade is heavenly; the merchandize he deals for is of the growth of that heavenly countrey, *Phil. 3. 20*. *Our conversation is in heaven*. Every mans conversation is suitable to his calling; he whose trade lies in the earth minds earthly things; and he whose trade is heavenly follows that close: *Every man minde his own businesse*, the Apostle tells us. You may possibly finde a Tradesman out of his shop now and then, but he is as a fish out of the water, never in his element till he be in his calling again. Thus when the Christian is about the world, and the worldling about heavenly matters, both are men out of their way, not right girt, till they get into their employment again. Now this heavenly trade is that which Satan doth in an especial manner labour to stop. Could the Christian enjoy but a free trade with heaven a few years without molestation, he would soon grow a rich man, too rich indeed for earth; but what with losses sustained by the hands of this Pyrate Satan, and also the wrong he receives by the treachery of some in his own bosome, (that like unfaithful servants hold correspondence with this robber) he is kept but low in this life and much of his gaines are lost. Now the Christians heavenly trade lies either within doors or abroad; he can be free in neither, Satan is at his heels in both.

First, within doors. This I may call his home-trade which is spent in secret, between God and his own soul, here the Christian drives an unknown trade: he is at heaven and home again, richly laden in his thoughts with heavenly meditations before the world knows where he hath been. Every creature he sees, is a text for his heart to raise some spiritual matter and observations from: Every Sermon he hears cuts him out work

to make up and enlarge upon when he gets alone. Every Providence is as winde to his sailes, and sets his heart a moving in some heavenly action or other suitable to the occasion. One while he is wrap't up with joy in the consideration of mercy, another while melted into godly sorrow for the sense of his sins. Sometimes exalting God in his praises, anon abusing himself before God for his own vileneffe. One while he is at the breast of the Covenant, milking out the consolations of the promises; at another time working his heart into a holy awe, and feare of the threatenings. Thus the Christian walks aloft, while the base worldling is licking the dust below. One of these heavenly pearles which the Christian trades for, is more worth then the worldling gets with all his sweat and travel in his whole life. The Christians feet stand where other mens heads are; he treads on the Moon, and is clothed with the Sun, he looks down on earthly men, (as one from a high hill doth upon those that live in some fenne or moore) and sees them buried in a fog of carnal pleasures and profits, while he breaths in a pure heavenly aire, but yet not so high as to be free from all stormes and tempests; many a sad gulf he hath from sin and Satan without. What else mean those sad complaints and groans, which come from the children of God, that their hearts are so dead and dull, their thoughts so roving and unfixt in duty, yea, many times so wicked and filthy, that they dare hardly tell what they are, for feare of staining their own lips, and offending the eares of others by naming them? Surely, the Christian findes it in his heart to will and desire he could meditate, pray, heare, and live after another sort then this, doth he not? yes, I durst be his surety he doth. But so long as there is a devil tempts, and we continue within his walk, it will be thus, more or lesse, as fast as we labour to clear the spring of our hearts, he will be labouring to royle or stop it again; so that we have two works to do at once, to performe a duty, and watch him that opposeth us, trowel and sword both in our hands. They had need work hard indeed, who have others continually endeavouring to pull down, as they are labouring to rear up the building.

Secondly, that part of the Christians trade, which lies abroad, is heavenly also. Take a Christian in his relations, calling,
neigh

neighbourhood, he is a heavenly trader in all; the great business of his life is to be doing or receiving some good, that company is not for him, that will neither give nor take this. What should a Merchant be where there is no buying nor selling? Every one labours (as his calling is) to seat himself where trade is quickest, and he is likest to have most takings. The Christian (where he may choose) takes such in relations near to himself (husband, wife, servants,) as may suit with his heavenly trade, and not such as will be a pull-back to him; he falls in with the holiest persons as his dearest acquaintance: if there be a Saint in the town where he lives, he'll finde him out, and this shall be the man he will consort with; and in his conversation with these and all else, his chief work is for heaven, his heavenly principle within inclines him to it. Now, this alarms hell. What, not contented to go to heaven himself, but by his holy example, gracious speeches, sweet counsels, seasonable reproofs, will he be trading with others, and labour to carry them along with him also? This brings the Lion fell and mad out of his den, such to be sure shall finde the devil in their way to oppose them. *I would have come, (saith Paul) but Satan hindered me.* He that will vouch God, and let it appear by the tenure of his conversation that he trades for him, shall have enemies enough, if the devil can help him to such.

Thirdly, the Christians hopes are all heavenly, he sets not upon any thing the world hath to give him. Indeed he would think himself the most miserable man of all others, if here were all he could make of his Religion. No, 'tis heaven and eternal life that he expects; and though he be so poor as not to be able to make a Will of a groat, yet he counts himself a greater heir, then if he were child to the greatest Prince on earth. This inheritance he sees by faith, and can rejoice in the hope of the glory which it will bring him. The masquery and cheating glory of the great ones of this world moves him not to envy their fanciful pomp, but when on the dunghill himself, he can forget his own present sorrows to pity them in all their bravery, knowing that within a few days the cross will be off his back, & the crowns off their heads together, their portion will be spent when he shall be to receive all his. These things entertain him with such joy that they will not suffer him to acknowledge himself miserable.

miserable, when others think him, and the devil tells him, he is such. This, this torments the very soule of the devil, to see the Christian under saile for heaven, fill'd with the sweet hope of his joyfull entertainment when he comes there, and therefore he raiseth what stormes and tempests he can, either to hinder his arival in that blessed Port, (which he most desires, and doth not wholly despaire of) or at least to make it a troublesome winter-voyage, (such as *Pauls* was, in which they suffered so much losse) and this indeed very often he obtains in such a degree, that by his violent impetuous temptations, beating long upon the Christian, he makes him throw over much precious lading of his joyes and comforts; yea, sometimes he brings the soul through streffe of temptation to think of quitting the ship, while for the present all hope of being saved seems to be taken away. Thus you see what we wrestle with devils for. We come to *Application*.

SECT. IV.

Use 1.
1.

This is a word of reproof to foure sorts of persons.

First, to those that are so far from wrestling against Satan for this heavenly prize, that they resist the offer of it. In stead of taking heaven by force, they keep it off by force. How long hath the Lord been crying in our streets, *Repent, for the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand*? how long have Gospel-offers rung in our ears? and yet to this day many devil-deluded soules furiously drive on towards hell, and will not be perswaded back, who refuse to be called the children of God, and choose rather the devils bondage, then the glorious liberty with which Christ would make them free, esteeming the pleasures of sinne for a season greater treasures then the riches of heaven. 'Tis storied of *Cato* (who was *Cesar*'s bitter enemy) that when he saw *Cesar* prevail, rather then fall into his hand and stand to his mercy, he laid violent hands on himself, which *Cesar* hearing of, passionately broke out into these words, *O Cato, cur invidisti mihi salutem tuam?* O *Cato*, why didst thou envie me the honour of saving thy life? And do not many walk as if they grudged Christ the honour of saving their soules? what other account can you give

give sinners of rejecting his grace? Are not heaven and happiness things desirable, and to be prefer'd before sin and misery? why then do you not embrace them? or are they the worse, because they come swimming to you in the blood of Christ? oh how ill must Christ take it to be thus used, when he comes on such a gracious embassage? may he not say to thee as once he did to those officers sent to attach him, *Do you come out against me as a thief with swords and staves?* if he be a thief, 'tis only in this, that he would steal your sins from you, and leave heaven in the room: O, for the love of God think what you do, 'tis eternal life you put away from you, in doing of which, *you judge your selves unworthy of it,* Acts 13.46.

Secondly, it reproves those who are Satans instruments, to rob soules of what is heavenly. Among thieves there are some ye call *Setters*, who enquire where a booty is to be had, which when they have found, and know such a one travels with a charge about him, then they employ some other to rob him, and are themselves not seen in the bulinesse. The devil is the grand *Setter*, he observes the Christian how he walks, what place and company he frequents, what grace or heavenly treasure he carries in his bosome; which when he hath done, he hath his instruments for the purpose to execute his designe. Thus he considered the admirable graces of *Job*, and calls about how he might best rob him of his heavenly treasure; and who but his wife and friends must do this for him? (well-knowing that his tale would receive credit from their mouthes.) O friends, ask your consciences whether you have not done the devil some service of this kinde in your dayes. Possibly you have a childe or servant who once look't heaven-ward, but your brow-beating of them scared them back, and now (may be) they are as carnal as you would have them: or possibly thy wife before acquainted with thee, was full of life in the wayes of God, but since she hath been transplanted into thy cold soile, what by thy frothy speeches, and unfavoury conversation, at best thy worldinesse and formality, she is now both decayed in her graces, and a loser in her comforts. O man, what an enditement will be brought against thee for this at Gods bar? you would come off better, were it for robbing one of his money and jewels, then of his graces and comforts.

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Thirdly,

3.

Thirdly, it reproves the woful negligence most shew in labouring for this heavenly prize. None but would be glad their souls might be saved at last, but where is the man or woman that makes it appear by their vigorous endeavour that they meane in earnest? what warlike preparation do they make against Satan, who lies between them and home? where are their armes, where their skill to use them; their resolution to stand to them, and conscionable care to exercise themselves dayly in the use of them? Alas, this is a rarity indeed, not to be found in every house, where the profession of Religion is hang'd out at the door, if wouling and wishing will bring them to heaven, then they may come thither, but as for this wrastling and fighting, this making Religion our businesse, they are as far from these, as at last they are like to be from heaven. They are of his mind in *Tully*, who in a Summers day, as he lay lazing himself on the grasse, would say, *O minime hoc esset laborare!* O that this were to work, that I could lie here and do my day-labour. Thus many melt and waste their lives in sloth, and lay in their hearts, O that this were the way to heaven! but will use no means to furnish themselves with grace for such an enterprise, I have read of a great Prince in *Germany*, invaded by a more potent enemy then himself, yet from his friends and Allies, (who flock't in to his help) he soon had a goodly Army, but had no mony (as he said) to pay them, but the truth is, he was loath to part with it, for which some in discontent went away, others did not vigorously attend his businesse, and so he was soon beaten out of his Kingdom; and his coffers, (when his Palace was rifled) were found thrack't with treasure. Thus he was ruined, as some sick men die, because unwilling to be at cost to pay the Physician. It will adde to the misery of damned souls, when they shall have leisure enough to consider what they have lost in losing God, to remember what means, offers and talents they once had towards the obtaining of everlasting life, but had not a heart to use them.

4.

Fourthly, it reproves those who make a great bufile and noise in Religion, who are forward in Profession, very bufile to meddle with the strictest duties, as if heaven had monopolized their whole hearts: but like the Eagle, when they tower highest, their prey is below where their eye is also. Such a generation
there

there ever was and will be, that mingle themselves with the Saints of God, who pretend heaven, and have their outward garb faced and fringed (as it were) with heavenly speeches and duties, while their hearts are lined with hypocrisie, whereby they deceive others, but most of all themselves; such may be the worlds Saints, but devils in Christs account. *Have not I chosen twelve, one of you is a devil?* And truly of all devils none so bad as the professing devil, the preaching, praying devil. O Sirs, be plain-hearted; Religion is as tender as your eye, it will not be jested with; Remember the vengeance which fell on *Belshazzar*, while he carowed in the bowles of the Sanctuary. Religion and the duties of it are consecrated things, not made for thee to drink thy lusts out of. God hath remarkably appeared in discovering and confounding such as have prostituted sacred things to world y ends. *Jezebel* fasts and prays, the better, to devour *Naboths* vineyard, but was devoured by it. *Absalom* was as sick till he had ravish't his fathers Crown, as his brother *Amnon*, till he had done the like to his sister, and to hide his treason he puts on a religious cloak, and therefore begs leave to go and pay his vow in *Hebron*, when he had another game in chate, and did he not fall by the hand of his hypocrisie? of all men their judgement is endorst with most speed, who silver over worldly or wicked enterprises with heavenly semblances, of this gang were those, *2 Pet. 2. 3.* concerning whom the Apostle saith, *Their damnation slumbers not*; and those, *Ezek. 14. 7. 8.* to whom God saith, *I the Lord will answer him by my selfe, and I will set my face against that man, and will smite him a signe and a Proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*

Secondly, try whether they be heavenly things or earthly thou chiefly puruest; certainly friends, we need not be so ignorant of our soules state and affairs; did we oftner converse with our thoughts, and observe the haunts of our hearts, we soon can tell what dish pleaseth our palate best, and may you not tell whether heaven or earth be the most savoury meat to your souls? and if you should ask how you might know whether heaven be the prize you chiefly desire, I would put you only upon this double trial.

First, art thou uniforme in thy pursuit? Doeſt thou contend

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for

Use 2.

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for heaven, and that which leads to heaven also? Earthly things God is pleased to retails; all have some, none have all; but in heavenly treasure he will not break the whole piece; and cut it into remnants. If thou wilt have heaven, thou must have Christ; if Christ, thou must like his service as well as his sacrifice; no holiness, no happiness. If God would cut off so much as would serve mens turnes, he might have customers enough; *Balaam* himself likes one end of the piece, *he would die like a righteous man*, though live like a wizzard as he was; no, God will not deal with such peddling Merchants; that man alone is for God, and God for him, who will come roundly up to Gods offer, and take all off his hands. One fitly compares holiness and happiness to those two sisters, *Leah* and *Rachel*. Happiness like *Rachel* seems the fairer, (even a carnal heart may fall in love with that) but holiness like *Leah* is the elder and beautiful also, though in this life it appears with some disadvantage, her eyes being bearded with tears of repentance, and her face furrowed with the works of mortification; *but this is the Law of that heavenly countrey*, that the younger Sister must not be bestowed before the elder. We cannot enjoy faire *Rachel*, Heaven and Happiness, except first we embrace tender-eyed *Leah*, Holiness with all her severe duties of repentance and mortification. Now Sirs, how like you this method? Art thou content to marry Christ and his grace, and then (serving a hard Apprenticeship in temptations both of prosperity and adversity, enduring the heat of the one, and the cold of the other) to wait till at last the other be given into thy bosome?

2. Secondly, if indeed heaven and heavenly things be the prize thou wrestlest for, thou wilt discover a heavenly deportment of heart, even in earthly things; wherever you meet a Christian, he is going to Heaven; Heaven is at the bottome of his lowest actions. Now observe thy heart in three particulars, in getting, in using, and in keeping earthly things, whether it be after a heavenly manner.

1. First, in getting earthly things: If Heaven be thy chief prize, then thou wilt be ruled by a heavenly Law in the gathering of these. Take a carnal wretch, and what his heart is set on, he will have, though it be by hook or crook. A lie fits *Gebazi's* mouth well enough, so he may fill his pockets by it. *Jezebel* dares

dares mock God, and murder an innocent man for an acre or two of ground. *Abſalom regnandi cauſa*, what will he not do? Gods fence is too low to keep a graceleſſe heart in bounds, when the game is before him; but a ſoul that hath heaven in its eye is ruled by heavens law: he dares not ſtep out of heavens road to take up a crown, as we ſee in *Dauids* carriage towards *Saul*. Indeed in ſo doing he ſhould croſſe himſelf in his own grand deſign, which is the glory of God, and the happineſſe of his own ſoul in enjoying of him; upon theſe very termes the ſervants of God have refuſed to be rich and great in the world, when either of theſe lay at ſtake: *Moses* threw his Court-preferment at his heels, *refuſing to be call'd the ſon of Pharaohs daughter*. *Abraham* ſcorned to be made rich by the King of *Sodom*, *Gen.* 14. 22. that he might avoid the ſuſpition of covetouſneſs and ſelf-ſeeking; it ſhall not be ſaid another day that he came to enrich himſelf with the ſpoil, more then to reſcue his kinſman. *Nehemiah* would not take the tax and tribute to maintain his ſtate, when he knew they were a poor peeled people, *becauſe of the fear of the Lord*. Doeſt thou walk by this rule? wouldeſt thou gather no more eſtate or honour then thou mayeſt have with Gods leave, and will ſtand with thy hopes of heaven?

Secondly, doeſt thou diſcover a heavenly Spirit in uſing theſe things? 2.

Fiſt, the Saint improves his earthly things for an heavenly end, where layeſt thou up thy treaſure? doeſt thou beſtow it on thy voluptuous paunch, thy hawks and thy hounds, or lockeſt thou it up in the boſome of Chriſts poor members? what uſe makeſt thou of thy honour and greatneſſe, to ſtrengthen the hands of the godly or the wicked? and ſo of all thy other temporal enjoyments; A gracious heart improves them for God; when a Saint prays for theſe things, he hath an eye to ſome heavenly end. If *David* prays for life, it is not that he may live, but *live and praiſe God*, *Pſal.* 119. 175. When he was driven from his regal throne by the rebellious armes of *Abſalom*; ſee what his deſire was and hope. *2 Sam.* 15. 25. *The King ſaid to Zadock Carry back the Ark of God into the City: if I ſhall finde favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it and his habitation. Mark, not ſhew me my Crown, nor Palace, but the Ark, the Houſe of God.*

Secondly, a gracious heart pursues earthly things with a holy indifferency, saving the violence and zeal of his spirit for the things of heaven; he useth the former as if he used them not, with a kinde of non-attendency, his head and heart is taken up with higher matters, how he may please God, thrive in his grace, enjoy more intimate communion with Christ in his Ordinances, in these he spreads all his sailes, plies all his oares, strains every part and power: thus we finde *David* upon his full speed; *My soul presseth hard after thee*, Psal. 63. And, before the Ark, we finde him dancing with all his might. Now a carnal heart is clean contrary, his zeal is for the world, and his indifferency in the things of God, he prays as if he did not pray, &c. he sweats in his shop, but chills and grows cold in his closet; O how hard to pully him up to a duty of Gods worship, or to get him out to an Ordinance? No weather shall keep him from the market; raine, blow, or snow, he goes thither; but if the Church-path be a little wet, or the air somewhat cold, 'tis apology enough for him if his pue be empty; when he is about any worldly businesse, he is as earnest at it, as the idolatrous Smith in hammering of his image, *who* (the Prophet saith) *worketh it with the strength of his armes, yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth, he drinketh not, and is faint*, Isa. 44. 12. so zealous is the muck-worme in his worldly employments, that he will pinch his carcase, and deny himself his repast in due season to pursue that; The Kitchin there shall wait on the shop. But in the worship of God, 'tis enough to make him sick of the Sermon, and angry with the Preacher, if he be kept beyond his houre; here the Sermon must give place to the Kitchin: so the man for his pleasures and carnal pastime, he tells no clock at his sports, and knows not how the day goes, when night comes, he is angry that it takes him off; but at any heavenly work, O how is the man punish't? time now hath got leaden heels he thinks; all he does at a Sermon is to tell the clock, and see how the glasse runs: if men were not willing to deceive themselves, surely they might know which way their heart goes, by the swift motion, or the hard tugging, and slow pace it stirs, as well as they know in a boat, whether they row against the tide, or with it.

Thirdly, the Christian useth these things with a holy feare, lest

lest earth should rob heaven, and his outward enjoyments prejudice his heavenly interest; he eats in feare, works in feare, rejoyceth in his abundance with feare: as *Job* sanctified his children by offering a sacrifice, out of a feare lest they had sinned; so the Christian is continually sanctifying his earthly enjoyments by prayer, that so he may be delivered from the snare of them.

Thirdly, the Christian is heavenly in his keeping of earthly things. The same heavenly Law which he went by in getting, he observes in holding them. As he dares not say he will be rich and honourable in the world, but if God will; so neither that he will hold what he hath, he only keeps them while his heavenly Father calls for them that at first gave them: If God will continue them to him, and entaile them on his posterity too, he blesteth God, and so he desires to do also when he takes them away. Indeed Gods meaning in the great things of this world, which sometimes he throws in upon the Saints, is chiefly to give them the greater advantage of expressing their love to him, in denying them for his sake. God never intended by that strange Providence, in bringing *Moses* to *Pharaoh's* Court, to settle him there in worldly pomp and grandure. (a carnal heart indeed would have expounded Providence, and interpreted it as a faire occasion put into his hands by God, to have advanced himself into the throne, (which some say he might in time have done) but as an opportunity to make his faith and self-denial more eminently conspicuous in throwing all these at his heels, for which he hath so honourable a remembrance among the Lord's Worthies. *Heb.* 11. 24, 25. And truly a gracious soule reckons he cannot make so much of his worldly interests any other way, as by offering them up for Christs sake, however that Traitor thought *Maries* ointment might have been carried to a better market, yet no doubt that good woman her self was only troubled, that she had not one more precious to poure on her dear Saviours head. This makes the Christians ever to hold the sacrificing knife at the throat of his worldly enjoyments, ready to offer them up when God calls; over-board they shall go, rather then hazard a wrack to faith or a good conscience, he sought them in the last place, and therefore he will part with them in the first. *Naboth* will hazard the Kings anger, (which at last cost him his life,)

Gen. 33. 9. 11

life,) rather then sell an acre or two of land which was his birth-right. The Christian will expose all he hath in this world to preserve his hopes for another: *Jacob* in his march towards *E-sau*, sent his servants with his flocks before, and came himself with his wives behinde; if he can save any thing from his brothers rage, it shall be what he loves best: if the Christian can save any thing it shall be his soul, his interest in Christ and Heaven, and then no matter if the rest go, even then he can say, not as *E-sau* to *Jacob*, I have כֶּבֶד, a great deal, but as *Jacob* to him, כָּלִי I have all, all I want, all I desire, as *David* expresseth it; *This is all my salvation, and all my desire*, 2 Sam. 23. 5. Now try whether thy heart be tuned to this note, does heaven give saw to thy earthly enjoyments, wouldest thou not keep thy honour, estate, no, not life it self to prejudice thy heavenly nature and hopes? which wouldest thou choose, if thou couldest not keep both, a whole skin, or a sound conscience? It was a strange answer, if true, which the *Historian* saith, *Henry* the fifth gave to his father, who had usurped the Crown, and now dying, sent for this his son, to whom he said, Fair son, take the Crown, (which stood on his pillow by his head) but God knowes how I came by it: to whom he answered, I care not how you came by it, now I have it, I will keep it as long as my sword can defend it. He that keeps earth by wrong, cannot expect Heaven by right.



CHAP. XIII.

An Exhortation to the pursuit of Heaven and heavenly things.

THirdly, Is it heaven and all that is heavenly that Satan seeks to hinder us of? let this provoke us the more earnestly to contend for them. Had we to do with an enemy that came only to plunder us of earthly trifles, would honours, estates, and what this world affords us stay his stomach, it might suffer a debate (in a soul that hath hopes of heaven) whether it were worth fighting to keep this lumber: but Christ and heaven these sure are too precious to part withal upon any termes. *Ask the Kingdom for him also*, said Solomon to Bath-Sheba, when she begg'd *Abisbag* for *Adonijah*. What can the devil leave thee worth if he deprive thee of these? and yet I confesse I have heard of one, that wished God would let him alone, and not take him from what he had here: Vile brute! the voice of a swine and not a man, that could chuse to wallow in the dung and ordure of his carnal pleasures, and wish himself for ever shut up with his swill in the hogs coat of this dunghil earth, rather then leave these to dwell in Heavens-Palace, and be admitted to no meaner pleasures then what God himself with his Saints enjoy. It were even just if God gave such brutes as these a swines face to their swinish hearts: But alas, how few then should we meet that would have the countenance of a man? the greatest part of the world (even all that are carnal and worldly) being of the same minde, though not so impudent as that wretch, to speak what they think. The lives of men tell plain enough that they say in their hearts, it is good being here, that they wish they could build Tabernacles on earth for all the mansions that are prepared in heaven. The transgression of the wicked said in *Davids* heart, *that the fear of God was not before them,*

them, Psal. 36. 1. and may not the worldliness of a muck-worm say in the heart of any rational man, that heaven and heavenly excellencies are not before their eyes or thoughts? O what a deep silence is there concerning these in the conversations of men! Heaven is such a stranger to the most, that very few are heard to enquire the way thither, or so much as ask the question in earnest, what they shall do to be saved. The most expresse no more desires of attaining heaven, then those blessed souls now in heaven do of coming again to dwell on earth; Alas, their heads are full of other projects, they are either as *Is- r. 1.* scatter'd over the face of the earth to gather straw, or bu- tied in picking that straw they have gathered, labouring to get the world, or pleasing themselves with what they have got. So that it is no more then needs to use some arguments to call men off the world, to the pursuit of heaven, and what is heavenly.

1. First, for earthly things, it is not necessary that thou hast them; that is necessary which cannot be supplied *per vicarium*, with somewhat besides it self. Now there is no such earthly enjoyment, but may be so supplied, as to make its room more desirable then its company. In Heaven there shall be light and no Sun, a rich feast and yet no meat, glorious robes and yet no cloathes, there shall want nothing, and yet none of this worldly glory be found there; yea, even while we are here, they may be recompenced, thou mayest be under infirmities of body, and yet better then if thou hadst health: *The Inhabitant shall not say, I am sick, the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity, Isa. 33. 34.* Thou mayest misse of worldly honour, and obtain with those Worthies of Christ, *Heb. 11.* a good report by faith, and that is a name better then of the great ones of the earth: thou mayest be poor in the world, and yet rich in grace, and, *Godliness, with content is great gain.* In a word, if thou partest with thy temporal life, and findest an eternal, what doest thou lose by the change? but heaven and heavenly things are such as cannot be recompenced with any other. Thou hast a heavenly soul in thy bosome, lose that, and where canst thou have another? There is but one heaven, misse that, and where can you take up your lodging but in hell? One Christ that can lead you thither, reject him, and there remains no more sacrifice for

for sinne. O that men would think on these things. Go sinner to the world, and see what it can afford you in lieu of these; may be it will offer to entertain you with its pleasures and delights; O poor reward for the losse of Christ and heaven! Is this all thou canst get? doth Satan rob thee of heaven and happinesse, and only give thee this posie to sinell on as thou art going to thy execution? will these quench hell-fire, or so much as cool those flames thou art falling into? who but those that have fore-done their understandings, would take these toys and new nothings for Christ and heaven? while Satan is pleasing your fancies with these rattles and bables, his hand is in your treasure, robbing you of that which is only necessary, 'Tis more necessary to be saved then to be; better not to be then to have a being in hell.

Secondly, earthly things are such, as it is a great uncertainty, whether with all our labour we can have them or not. The world, though so many thousand years old, hath not learn't the Merchant such a method of trading, as that from it he may infallibly conclude he shall at last get an estate by his trade: nor the Courtier such rules of comporting himself to the humour of his Prince, as to assure him he shall rise. They are but few that carry a vay the prize in the worlds lottery, the greater number have only their labour for their paines, and a sorrowful remembrance left them of their egregious folly, to be led such a wilde-goose chase after that, which hath deceived them at last. But now for heaven and the things of heaven, there is such a clear and certain rule laid down, that if we will but take the counsell of the Word, we can neither mistake the way, nor in that way miscarry of the end. *As many as walk by this rule, shall receive the fruit of life, and the whole Israel of God.* There are some indeed who run, and yet obtain not this prize, that seek & find not, knock and find the door shut upon them, but it is, because they do it either not in the right manner, or in the right season. Some would have heaven, but if God save them he must save their sins also, for they do not mean to part with them; and how heaven can hold God and such company together, judge you; As they come in at one door, Christ and all those holy spirits with him would run out at t'ie other. Ungratful wretches, that will not come to this glorious feast, unlesse they may bring that with them, which would disturb the

joy of that blisseful state, and offend all the guests that sit at the Table with them, yea, drive God out of his own mansion-house. A second sort would have heaven, but like him in *Ruth*, *ch. 4. v. 2, 3, 4.* who had a minde to his Kinsman *Elimelechs* land, and would have paid for the purchase, but he liked not to have it by marrying *Ruth*, and so missed of it, some seem very forward to have heaven and salvation, if their own righteousness could procure the same, (all the good they do, and duties they perform, they lay up for this purchase) but at last perish, because they close not with Christ, and take not heaven in his right. A third sort are content to have it by Christ, but their desires are so impotent and listlesse, that they put them upon no vigorous use of means to obtain him, and so (like the sluggard) they sterve, because they will not pull their hands out of their bosome of sloth to reach their food that is before them: for the world they have mettall enough, and too much, they trudge far and near for that, and when they have run themselves out of breath, can stand and *pant after the dust of the earth*, as the Prophet phraseth it, *Amos 2. 7.* But for Christ and obtaining interest in him, O how key-cold are they! there is a kinde of cramp invades all the powers of their soules when they should pray, hear, examine their hearts, draw out their affections in hungriings and thirstings after his grace and Spirit. 'Tis strange to see how they even now went full soop to the world, are suddenly becalm'd, not a breath of winde stirring to any purpose in their soules after these things, and is it any wonder that Christ and Heaven should be denied to them that have no more mind to them? lastly, some have zeal enough to have Christ and Heaven, but it is when the Master of the house is risen, and hath shut to the door, and truly then they may stand long enough rapping, before any come to let them in. There is no Gospel preached in another world; but as for thee, poor soul, who art perswaded to renounce thy lusts, throw away the conceit of thy own righteousness, that thou mayest run with more speed to Christ, and art so possesst with the excellency of Christ, thy own present need of him, and salvation by him, that thou pantest after him more then life it self; In Gods Name go on and speed, be of good comfort, he calls thee by name to come unto him, that thou mayest have rest for thy soul. There is an office in the Word

Word, where thou mayest have thy soul and its eternal happiness ensured to thee: Those that come to him, as he will himself in no wise cast away, so not suffer any other to pluck them away. *This day* (saith Christ to *Zaccheus*) *salvation is come to thy house*, Luke 19. 9. Salvation comes to thee, (poore soul) that openest thy heart to receive Christ, thou hast eternal life already, as sure as if thou wert a glorified Saint, now walking in that heavenly City. O Sirs, if there were a free trade proclaimed to the *Indies*, enough gold for all that went, and a certainty of making a safe voyage, who would stay at home? But alas, this can never be had: all this, and infinitely more may be said for heaven; and yet how few leave their uncertain hopes of the world to trade for it? what account can be given for this, but the desperate atheisme of mens hearts? they are not yet fully perswaded whether the Scripture speaks true or not, whether they may rely upon the discovery that God makes in his Word of this new-found land, and those mines of spiritual treasure there to be had as certain. God open the eyes of the unbelieving world (as he did the Prophets servants) that they may see these things to be realities and not fictions; 'tis faith only that gives a being to these things in our hearts. By faith *Moses* saw him that was invisible

Thirdly, earthly things when we have them, we are not sure of them; like birds, they hop up and down, now on this hedge, and anon upon that, none can call them his own; rich to day, and poor tomorrow: In health when we lie down, and arrested with pangs of death before midnight: Joyful Parents, one while solacing our selves with the hopes of our budding posterity, and may be ere long knocks one of *Jubs* messengers at our door to tell us they are all dead; now in honour, but who knows whether we shall not live to see that buried in scorn and reproach? The Scripture compares the multitude of people to waters, the great ones of the world sit upon these waters; as the ship floats upon the waves; so do their honours upon the breath and favour of the multitude; and how long is he like to sit that is carried upon a wave? one while they are mounted up to heaven (as *David* speaks of the ship) and then down again they fall into the deep. *We have ten parts in the King* (say the men of *Israel*;) 2 Sam. 19. 43. and in the very next verse,

Sheba doth but sound a trumpet of sedition, saying, *We have no part in David, no inheritance in the sonne of Jesse*, and the winde is in another corner presently : for its said, *Every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba*. Thus was *David* cried up and down, and that almost in the same breath. Unhappy man he, that hath no surer portion then what this variable world will afford him. The time of mourning for the departure of all earthly enjoyments is at hand, we shall see them as *Eglons* servants did their Lord, fallen down dead before us, and weep because they are not. What folly then is it to dandle this vaine world in our affections, whose joy like the childes laughter on the mothers knee, is sure to end in a cry at last, and neglect heaven and heavenly things which endure for ever? O remember *Dives* stirring up his pillow, and composing himself to rest, how he was call'd up with the tydings of death, before he was warm in this his bed of ease, and laid with sorrow on another, which God had made for him in flames, from whence we hear him roaring in the anguish of his conscience. O soul, couldest thou get but an interest in the heavenly things we are speaking of, these would not thus slip from under thee; heaven is a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. Christ an abiding portion, his graces and comforts sure waters that faile not, but spring up unto eternal life. The quailles that were food for the *Israelites* lust, soon ceased, but the rock that was drink to their faith followed them; this rock is Christ, make sure of him, and he will make sure of thee, he'll follow thee to thy sick-bed, and lie in thy bosome, chearing thy heart with his sweet comforts, when worldly joyes lie cold upon thee, (as *David's* cloathes on him) and no warmth of comfort to be got from them. When thy outward senses are lock't up, that thou canst neither see the face of thy dear friends, nor hear the counsel and comfort they would give thee, then he will come (though these doors be shut) and lay. Peace be to thee my dear childe; feare not death or devils, I stay to receive thy last breath, and have here my Angels waiting, that as soon as thy soule is breathed out of thy body, they may carry and lay it in my bosome of love, where I will nourish thee with those eternal joyes that my blood hath purchased, and my love prepared for thee.

Fourthly, earthly things are empty and unsatisfying. We may have too much, but never enough of them; they oft breed loathing, but never content; and indeed how should they, being so disproportionate to the vast desires of these immortal spirits that dwell in our bosomes? A spirit hath not flesh and bones, neither can it be fed with such, and what hath the world, but a few bones covered over with some fleshly delights to give it? The lesse is blessed of the greater, not the greater of the lesse. These things therefore being so far inferiour to the nature of man, he must look higher if he will be blessed, even to God himself who is the Father of spirits. God intended these things for our use, not enjoyment; and what folly is it to think we can squeeze that from them, which God never put in them? They are breasts, that moderately drawn, yield good milk, sweet refreshing, but wring them too hard, and you will suck nothing but winde or blood from them. We lose what they have, by expecting to finde what they have not; none finde lesse sweetnesse and more dissatisfaction in these things, then those who strive most to please themselves with them. The cream of the creature floats atop, and he that is not content to sleet it, but thinks by drinking a deeper draught to finde yet more, goes further to speed worse, being sure by the disappointment he shall meet, to pierce himself through with many sorrows. But all these feares might happily be escaped, if thou wouldest turn thy back on the creature, and face about for heaven: labour to get Christ, and through him hopes of heaven, and thou takest the right road to content, thou shalt see it before thee, and enjoy the prospect of it as thou goest, yea, finde that every step thou drawest nearer and nearer to it; O what a sweet change wouldest thou finde? As a sick man coming out of an impure unwholesome climate, where he never was well, when he gets into fresh aire or his native soile: so wilt thou finde a cheering of thy spirits, and reviving thy soule with unspeakable content and peace. Having once closed with Christ, first the guilt of all thy sinnes is gone, and this spoild all thy mirth before; all your dancing of a childe, when some pin pricks it, will not make it quiet or merry; well, now that pin is taken out which robbed thee of the joy of thy life. Secondly, thy nature is renewed and sanctified; and when is a man at ease, if not when he is in health?

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and what is holinesse, but the creature restored to his right temper, in which God created him? Thirdly, thou becomest a childe of God, and that cannot but please thee well (I hope) to be son or daughter to so great a King. Fourthly, thou hast a right to heavens glory, whither thou shalt ere long be conducted to take and hold possession of that thy inheritance for ever, and who can tell what that is? *Nicephorus* tells us of one *Agbarus*, a great man, that (hearing so much of Christs fame, by reason of the miracles he wrought) sent a Painter to take his picture, and that the Painter when he came was not able to do it, because of that radiancy and divine splendour which shone on Christs face. Whether this be true or no, I leave it but to be sure, there is such a brightnesse on the face of Christ glorified; and that happinesse which in heaven Saints shall have with him, as forbids us that dwell in mortal flesh to conceive of it aright, much more to expresse; 'tis best going thither to be informed, and then we shall confesse we on earth heard not half of what we there finde; yea, that our present conceptions are no more like to that vision of glory we shall there have, then the Sunne in the Painters Table, is to the Sunne it self in the Heavens. And if all this be so, why then do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not, yea, for that which keeps you from that which can satisfie? Earthly things are like some trash, which doth not only not nourish, but take away the appetite from that which would. Heaven and heavenly things are not relished by a soul vitiated with these. Manna, though for deliciousnesse called Angels food, yet but light bread to an Egyptian palate. But these spiritual things depend not on thy opinion. O man, whoever thou art (as earthly things in a great measure do,) that the value of them should rise or fall as the worlds exchange doth, and as vain man is pleased to rate them; think gold dirt, and it is so, for all the royal stamp on it. Count the swelling titles of worldly honour (that proud dust brags so in) vanity, and they are such: but have base thoughts of Christ, and he is not the worse; slight heaven as much as you will, it will be heaven still, and when thou comest so far to thy wits with the Prodigal, as to know which is best fare, husks or bread; where best living, among hogs in the field, or in thy Fathers house, then thou wilt know

know how to judge of these heavenly things better, till then, go and make the best market thou canst of the world, but look not to finde this pearle of price, true satisfaction to thy soul in any of the creatures shops; and were it not better to take it when thou mayest have it, then after thou hast wearied thy self in vaine in following the creature, to come back with shame, and may be misse of it here also, because thou wouldest not have it when it was offered?



VERSE 13.

*Wherefore take unto you the whole Armour of God,
that ye may be able to withstand in the evil
day, and having done all to stand.*



He Apostle in these words re-assumes his former Exhortation mentioned, *verse 11.* and presseth it with a new force, from that more particular discovery which he gives of the enemy, *verse 12.* where like a faithful Scout he makes a full report of Satans great power and malice, and also discloseth what a dangerous design he hath upon the Saints, no lessethen to despoile them of all that is heavenly: from all which he gives them a second Alarm, and bids them *Arme, Arme, Wherefore take unto you, &c.* In the words consider,

First, the exhortation with the inference, *Wherefore take unto you the whole Armour of God.*

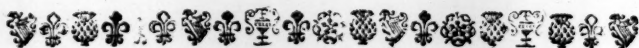
Secondly, the argument with which he urgeth the exhortation, and that is double.

First, *That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.*

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Secondly, *having done all, to stand*, that is, both able to fight and able to conquer. As for the first general, *the Exhortation*, we shall wave it as to the substance of it, being the same with what we have handled, v. 11. only there are two observables which we shall lightly touch; The one from the repetition of the very same exhortation so soon, one verse only interposed, The other from the verbe the Apostle useth here, which being not the same with v. 11. affords a different note. There it is 'Ερδύσατε, here 'Αναμαρτυρετε.



CHAP. I.

The reason why the Apostle renews the same Exhortation, as also what truthes, Ministers are often to preach to their people.

I. **F**irst of the first, the repetition of the same exhortation, and that in so short a space. Sure it was not for want of matter, but rather out of abundance of zeal, that he harps the second time on the same string. Indeed he is the better Workman, who drives one nail home with reiterated blows, then he which covets to enter many, but fastens none. Such Preachers are not likely to reach the conscience, who hop from one truth to another, but dwell on none. Every hearer is not so quick as the Preacher, to take a notion as 'tis first darted forth, neither can many carry away so much of that Sermon. which is made up all of varieties, (where a point is no sooner named, but presently pulls back its hand, and another makes a breach and comes forth, before the first hath been opened and hammered upon the conscience by a powerful application). As where the discourse is homogeneal, and some one necessary truth is clear'd, insisted on, and urged home with blow upon blow, Here the whole matter of the discourse is a kin, and one part

remembered, brings the memory acquainted with the other, whereas in the former, one puts out the other in a weak memory. Short hints and away, may please a Scholar, but not so profitable for others, the one more fit for the Schooles, but the other for the Pulpit. Were I to buy a garment in a shop, I should like him better, that layes one good piece or two before me, that are for my turn (which I may fully peruse,) then him who takes down all his shop, and heaps piece upon piece (meerly to shew his store) till at last for variety I can look wishly on none, they lie so one upon another.

Again, as it is profitable thus to insist on truths, so 'tis not unbecoming a Minister to preach the same truths again and again; *Paul* here goes over and over the same exhortation, *v. 11. v. 13.* and elsewhere tells us, *this is not grievous to him, but to them it is safe*, to hear the same things over and over, *Phil.* 3. 1. There are three sorts of Truths must in our Ministry be preached oft.

First, *Fundamental Truths*, or, as we call them, catechise-points, that contain truths necessary to be known and believed. The weight of the whole building lies on these ground-cells, more then on superstructory truths. In a Kingdome there are some staple commodities and trades, without which the Common-weale could not subsist, as wool, corne, &c. in our Countrey; and these ought to be encouraged above others, (which though they be an ornament to the Nation, yea, adde to the riches of it, yet are not so necessary to the subsistence of it.) Thus here; there is an excellent use of our other Ministerial labours, as they tend to beautifie and adorne, yea, enrich the Christian with the knowledge of spiritual mysteries; but that which is chiefly to be regarded is the constant faithful opening of those main truths of the Gospel. These are the Land-marks, and shew us the bounds of truth, and as it is in townes that butt one upon another, if the inhabitants do not sometimes perambulate, and walk the bounds, (to shew the youth what they are) when the old studs are gone, the next generation may lose all their priviledges by their encroaching neighbours, because not able to tell what is their own. There is no fundamental truth, but hath some evil neighbour (heresie I meane) butting on it; and the very reason why a spirit of error hath

so encroach't of late yeares upon truth, is, because we have not walk't the bounds with our people in acquainting them with, and stablishing their judgements on these fundamental points, so frequently and carefully as is requisite. And people are much in the fault, because they cast so much contempt upon this work, that they count a Sermon on such points next to lost, and only childes meat.

Secondly, *those truths are oft to be preach't, which Ministers observe to be most undermined by Satan, or his instruments, in the judgments and loves of their People.* The Preacher must read and study his people as diligently as any book in his study; and as he finds them, dispense like a faithful steward unto them. *Paul* takes notice that the *Galatians* had been in ill handling by false Apostles, who had even bewitch't them back to the Law in that great point of Justification, and see how he beats upon that point. Our people complain, we are so much, so oft reproving the same error or sin, and the fault is their own, because they will not leave it; who will blame the dog for continuing to bark, when the thief is all the while in the yard? Alas, alas, it is not once or twice rowling against sin will do it. When people think the Minister shews his laziness, because he preacheth the same things, he may then be exercising his patience, in continuing to exhort and reprove those who oppose, waiting, if at last God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. We are bid to lift up our voice like a trumpet, and would you have us cease while the battel lasts, or sound a retreat when it should be a battel?

Thirdly, *truths of daily use and practice.* These are like bread and salt, whatever else is on, these must be on the board every meale. *Saint Peter* was of this minde, *2 Per. 1. 12, I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of these things, though ye know them.* He had (you may see) been speaking of such graces and duties, that they could not passe a day without the exercise of them, and therefore will be ever their Monitor, to stir up their pure mindes about them. All is not well, when a man is weary of his ordinary food, and nothing will go down but rarities; the stomach is sickly, when a man delights rather to pick some sallier, then eat of solid meat, and how far this dainty age is gone in this spiritual disease, I think few are so far come to them.

themselves, as yet to consider and lament. O Sirs, be not weary, as in doing, so not in hearing those savoury truths preach't you have daily use of, because you know them, and have heard them often; faith and repentance will be good doctrine to preach and heare to the end of the world; you may as well quarrel with God, because he hath made but one heaven, and one way to it, as with the Preacher, for preaching these over and over; if thy heart were humble, and thy palate spiritual, old truths would be new to thee every time thou hearest them. In heaven the Saints draw all their wine of joy, (as I may so say at one tap) and shall to all eternity, and yet it never tastes flat. God is that one object their soules are filled with, and never weary of, and can any thing of God and his love be wearisome to thee in the hearing here? I am not all this while an Advocate for any Loyterer in our Lords vineyard, for any slothful servant in the work of the Gospel, who wraps up his talent in idleness, or buries it in the earth, (where (may be, he is digging and playing the worldling all the week, and then hath nothing to set before his people on the Lords day, but one or two old mouldy loaves, which were kneaded many yeares before.) This is not the good Steward, here is the old, but where are the new things which he should bring out of his treasure? If the Minister labours not to encrease his stock, he is the worst thief in the Parish. It is wicked for a man trusted with the improving of Orphans estates, to let them lie dead by him, much more for a Minister not to improve his gifts, (which I may call the town-stock, given for the good of the soules of both rich and poor;) If that *Preacher* was wise, *Ecc. 12. 9.* who still taught the people knowledge, that is, was ever going on, endeavouring to build them higher in knowledge, and that he might, *did give good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs;* then surely he will be proved a foolish Preacher at last, that wastes his time in sloth, or spends more of it in studying how to adde to his estate out of his peoples, then how to adde to their gifts and graces, by a conscionable endeavour to encrease his own.



CHAP. II.

*The best of Saints subject to decline in their graces,
and why we are to endeavour a recovery of de-
cayes in grace.*

2. **T**He second observable in the exhortation is taken from the verbe, which the Apostle useth, ἀναλαμβάνειν, which signifies not only to take, but to take again, or recover a thing which we have lost, or re-assume a thing which for the present we have left. Now the Apostle writing to the Saints at *Ephesus*, who (at least many of them) were not now to put on this Armour by a Conversion, (or the first work of faith, which no doubt had already past upon many among them) he, in regard of them and believers to the end of the world hath a further meaning, i. e. that they would put on more close where this armour hangs loose, and they would recover, where they have let fall any duty, or decayed in any grace. So that the Note is,

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That the Christian should have an especial care to reparaire his broken Armour, to recover his decaying graces. This Armour may be battered; I might shew sad examples in the several pieces. Was not *Jacobs* girdle of truth and sincerity unbuckled, when he used that sinful policy to get the blessing? he was not the plain man then, but the subplantour; but he had as good have stayed Gods time: he was paid home in his own kinde. He puts a cheat on his father, and did not *Laban* put a cheat on him, giving *Leah* for *Rachel*? What say you to *David*s breast-plate of righteousness in the matter of *Uriah*? was it not shot through, and that holy man fearfully wounded? who lay almost a yeare (for ought we reade of him) before he came to himself, so far as to be thoroughly sensible of his sin, till *Nathan*, a faithful Chirurgeon was sent to search the wound, and clear it of that dead flesh,

flesh, which had growne over it? And *Jonah*, (otherwise a holy Prophet) when God would send him on an errand to *Nineveh*, he hath his *shoes* to seek, I mean that preparation and readinesse with which his minde should have been shod, to have gone at the first call. Good *H Ezekiah* we finde how near his helmet of hope was of being beaten off his head, who tells us himself what his thoughts were in the day of his distresse, that he *should not see the Lord in the land of the living*, expecting that God would never let go his hold, *till like a Lion he had broke his bones, and at last made an end of him*. Even *Abraham* himself, famous for faith, yet had his fits of unbelief and distrustful qualms coming over his valiant heart; now in this case the Christians care should be to get his armour speedily repaired. A battered helmet is next to no helmet in point of present use, grace in a decay is like a man pull'd off his legs by sicknesse; if some meanes be not used to recover it, little service will be done by it, or comfort receiued from it. Therefore Christ gives this Church of *Ephesus*, (to whom *Paul* wrote this Epistle) this counsel, *To remember from whence she was fallen, to repent and do her first works*. How many does a declining Christian wrong at once?

First, he wrongs God, and that in a high degree, because God reckons upon more honour to be paid him in by his Saints grace, then by all other talents which his creatures have to trade with in the world. He can in some sense better bear the open sins of the world, then the decayes of his Saints graces; they by abusing their talents, rob him but of his *oyle, flaxe and wool*: But the Christian by the other, bereaves him of the glory which should be paid him from his faith, zeal, patience, self denial, sincerity and the rest. Suppose a Master should trust one servant with his money, and another with his childe to be look't to, would he not be more displeased to see his dear childe hurt, or almost kill'd by the negligence of the one; then his money stollen by the carelesnesse of the other? Grace is the new creature, the birth of the Spirit, when this comes to any harme by the Christians carelesse walking, it must needs go nearer the heart of God, then the wrong he hath from the world, who are trusted with nothing like this.

Secondly, he that declines in grace, and labours not to repair it, he wrongs his brethren who have a share in one anothers grace,
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he wrongs his whole body that seeks not cure for a wound in any member. We are bid to *love one another*, 2 ep. of *John* v. 5. but how shall we shew our love to one another? the very next words will direct us. *And this is love, that we walk after his Commandments.* Indeed we shew little love to our brethren by sinning; whereby we are sure either to ensnare them or grieve them; and how to let grace go down, and sin not go up, is riddle to any that know what they both are.

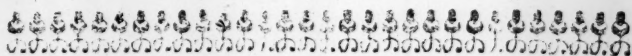
Thirdly, the Christian wrongs himself in not endeavouring to reparaire his broken armour, and recover his declining grace. By this he loses the evidence of his inheritance, at least so blots it, that it cannot be so clearly perceived by him. A declining Christian must needs be a doubting Christian, because the common symptome of an hypocrite, is to wear and waste like a stake set in the ground, (which rots, while true grace like the tree grows.) Is not this the knot which the devil poseth many poor souls withal, and findes them work for many yeares to untie? If thou wert a Christian thou wouldest grow. Right Saints go from strength to strength, and thou goest from strength to weaknesse. They go up the hill to *Zion*, every Ordinance and Providence is a step that bears them nearer Heaven; but thou goest down the hill and art further from thy salvation then when thou didst first believe (as thou thoughtest) and doth it stand with thy wisdom, Christian, to put a staffe into the devils hand, an argument into his mouth, to dispute against thy salvation with? If you held an estate by the life of a childe, which upon the death of it should all go away from you, that childe I warrant you should be well look't unto; his head should not ake, but you would post to the Physician for counsel; I pray what is your evidence for that glorious estate you hope for? Is it not Christ within you? Is not this new creature (which may well he call'd Christ for its likeness to him) the young heire of Heavens glory? and when that is sick or weak, is it not time to use all meanes for its recovery? whilst thus, thou canst neither live nor die comfortably. Not live; a man in a consumption has little joy of his life; he neither findes sweetnesse in his meat, nor delight in his work, as a healthful man doth. O how sweet is the promise to faith when active and vigorous? how easie the yoke of the Command to the Christian, when his conscience is not gall'd with guilt, nor his strength

strength enfeebled by temptation ? but the Christian in a declining condition, he tastes not the Promise, every command is grievous, and every duty burdensome to him : he goes in pain like one whose foot is out of joynt, though the way be never so pleasant. And he is as unfit to die as he is to live, such a one can like no more to hear the newes of death, then a tenant that wants his rent doth to hear of the quarter day. This made *David* beg time of God ; *Spare me a little, that I may recover my strength.*

Having shewen you why the Christian should endeavour to recover his declining graces, it will be very requisite to give a word of counsel to the Christian.

First, to direct him how to judge of the declining state of grace, that he may not passe a false judgement upon himself therein.

Secondly, to direct him when he findes grace to be in a declination, how he may recover it.



CHAP. III.

A cautionary direction from what we may not, as also from what we may judge our graces to be in a declination.

First of the first, *How may a Christian judge whether grace be declining in him or no ?* *Quest.*

First, I shall resolve this negatively, and shew by what he is not to judge his grace to decline. *Ans.*

Secondly, positively, by what he may certainly conclude a decay of grace.

First, negatively, and that in several particulars.

First, Christian, do not judge grace to be fallen weaker, because thy sense of corruption is grown stronger. This oft lies at the bot-

to me of poor souls complaints in this case. O they never felt pride, hypocrisie and other corruptions so haunt them as now, none knows how they are vexed with these, and the like besides themselves. Now let me ask thee who makest this sad moane, whether thou doest not think these corruptions were in thee before thou didst thus feel them, how oft hast thou prayed as formally, and not been troubled? how oft hast thou stood chatting with the same lusts, and thy soule hath not been laid low before the Lord with such abasement of thy self as now? deal faithfully between God and thy soule, and tell not a lie for God by bearing false witness against thy self. If it be thus, thou hast rather a comfortable signe of grace growing then decaying. Sin cannot be on the getting hand, if the sense of sinne grow quick; this is the concomitant of a thriving soule, none so full of complaints of their own hearts as such; the least sin goes now to their very soules, which makes them think viler of themselves then ever: but it is not the increase of sin in them, but the advance of their love to Christ makes them judge so: when the Sun shines with some power, and the yeare gets up, we observe, though we may have frosts and snow, yet they do not lie long, but are soon dissolved by the Sun. O 'tis a sweet signe that the love of Christ shines with a force upon thy soule, that no corruptions can lie long in thy bosome, but they melt into sorrow and bitter complaints. That is the decaying soul, where sinne lies bound up, and frozen, little sense of, or sorrow for it appears.

2. Secondly. Take heed thou thinkest not grace decayes, because thy comfort withdraws. The influence of the Sun comes where the light of it is not to be found, yea, is mighty, as appears in those mines of gold and silver, which are concocted by the same. And so may the actings of grace be vigorous in thee, when least under the shines of his countenance. Did ever faith triumph more then in our Saviour, crying, *My God, my God?* here faith was at its *meridian*, when it was midnight in respect of joy. Possibly thou comest from an Ordinance, and bringest not home with thee those sheaves of comfort thou usest to do, and therefore concludest grace acted not in thee as formerly. Truly if thou hast nothing else to go by, thou mayest wrong the grace of God in thee exceedingly. Because thy comfort

fort is extrinsecal to thy duty, a boon which God may give or not, yea, doth give to the weak, and deny to the strong. The traveller may go as fast, and rid as much ground, when the Sun doth not shine, as when it doth; (though indeed he goes not so merrily on his journey) nay, sometimes he makes the more haste; the warm Sun makes him sometime to lie down and loyter, but when dark and cold, he puts on with more speed. Some graces thrive best (like some flowers) in the shade, such as humility, dependance on God, &c.

Thirdly, take heed thou doest not mistake, and think thy grace decays, when, may be, it is only thy temptations increase, and not thy grace decrease. If you should hear a man say, because he cannot to day run so fast, when a hundred weight is on his back, as he could yesterday without any such a burden, that therefore he was grown weaker, you would soon tell him where his mistake lies. Temptation lies not in the same heaviness alway upon the Christians shoulder; observe therefore whether Satan is not more then ordinary let loose to assault thee, whether thy temptations come not with more force and violence then ever; possibly, though thou doest not with the same facility overcome these, as thou hast done lesse, yet grace may act stronger in conflicting with the greater, then in overcoming the lesse. The same ship, that when lightly ballasted, and favoured with the winde goes mounting, at another time deeply laden and going against winde and tide, may move with a slow pace, and yet they in the ship take more pains to make it saile thus, then they did when it went faster.

Secondly, positively, how thou mayest conclude that grace is declining; and that in a threefold respect.

First, in reference to temptations to sin.

Secondly, in reference to the duties of Gods Worship.

Thirdly, the frame of thy heart in worldly employments.

First, in reference to sin, and that is threefold.

First, when thou art not so wakeful to discover the encroachings of sin upon thee as formerly; at one time we finde *Davids* heart smote him, when he but rent the skirt of *Sauls* garment: at another time when his eye glanced on *Bathsheba* , he takes no such notice of the snare Satan had him in, and so is led from one sin to another, which plainly shewed that grace in him was

heavy-eyed, and his heart not in so holy a frame as it had been. If an enemy comes up to the gates, and the Sentinel not so much as give an alarm to the City of his approach, it shews he is off his guard, either fallen asleep, or worse: If grace were awake, and thy conscience had not contracted some hardnesse, it would do its office.

2. Secondly, when a temptation to sin is discovered, and thou findest thy heart shut up that thou doest not pray against it, or not with that zeal and holy indignation, as formerly upon such occasions; it is a bad signe, that lust hath got an advantage of thy grace, that thou canst not readily betake thy selfe to thy armes. Thy affections are bribed, and this makes thee so cold a Suitour at the throne of grace, for help against thine enemy.

3. Thirdly, when the arguments prevailing most with thee to resist temptations to sin, or to mourn for sin committed, are more carnal and lesse Evangelical then formerly: may be thou remembrest when thy love to Christ would have spit fire on the face of Satan tempting thee to such a sin; but now that holy fire is so abated, that if there were not some other carnal motives to make the vote full, it would hazard to be carried for it, rather then against it; and so in mourning for a sin there is possibly now some slavish arguments, (like an onion in the eye, which makes thee weep, rather then pure ingenuity arising from love to God whom thou hast offended; this speaks a sad decay, and the more mixture there is of such carnal arguments, either in the resisting of, or mourning for sin, the greater the declination of grace is. *Dauids* natural heat fure was much decayed, when he needed so many cloathes to be laid on him, and he yet feel so little heat, the time was he would have sweat with fewer. I am afraid, many their love to Christ will be found (in these declining times) to have lost so much of its youthful vigour, that what would formerly have put them into a holy fury, and burning zeal against some sins, (such as Sabbath-breaking, pride of apparel, neglect of family-duties &c.) hath now much ado to keep any heat at all in them against the same.

Secondly, in point of duties of worship.

First, if thy heart doth not prompt thee with that forwardnesse and readinesse as formerly, to hold communion with God in

in any duty; possibly thou knowest the time when thy heart echoed back to the motions of Gods Spirit bidding thee, *Seek his face; Thy face, Lord, will I seek*; yea, thou didst long as much till a Sabbath, or Sermon-season-came, as the carnal wretch doth till it be gone; but now thy pulse doth not beat so quick a march to the Ordinances publike or secret; nature cannot but decay, if appetite to food go away; a craving soul is the thriving soule, such a childe that will not let his mother rest, but is frequently crying for the breast.

Secondly, when thou declinest in thy care to perform duties in a spiritual sort, and to preserve the sense of those more inward failings, which in duty none but thy self can check thee of. It is not frequency of duty, but spirituality in duty causeth thriving, and therefore neglect in this point soon brings grace into a consumptive posture. Possibly, soul, the time was thou wert not satisfied with praying, but thou didst watch thy heart strictly, (as a man would every piece in a summe of money he payes, lest he should wrong his friend with any brasse or uncurrant coin) thou wouldest have God not only have duty, but duty stamp't with that faith which makes it currant, have that zeal and sincerity which makes it Gospel-weight; but now thou art more careless and formal; O look to it (poor soul) thou wilt, if thou continue thus carelesse, melt in thy spiritual state apace. Such dealings will spoil thy trade with heaven, God will not take off these slighty duties at thy hands.

Thirdly, when a Christian gets little spiritual nourishment from communion with God, to what it hath done. The time hath been (may be) thou couldest shew what came of thy praying, hearing and fasting; but now the case is altered. There is a double strength communion with God imparts to a soul in a healthful disposition, strength to faith, and strength for our obediential walking; dost thou hear and pray, and get no more strength to hold by a Promise, no more power over, or brokenesse of heart under thy usual corruptions? what? come down the Mount, and break the Tables of Gods Law, as soon as thou art off the place? as deep in thy passion, as uneven in thy course as before? there is a sure decay of that inward heat, which should and would (if in its right temper) suck some nourishment from these.

Thirdly, by thy behaviour in thy worldly employments.

First, when thy worldly occasions do not leave thee in so free and spiritual a disposition, to return into the Presence of God as formerly; may be thou couldest have come from thy shop and family-employments to thy closet, and finde that they have kept thee in frame, yea, may be delivered thee up in a better frame for those duties, but now 'tis otherwise, thou canst not so shake them off, but they cleave to thy spirit, and give an earthly savour to thy praying and hearing; thou hast reason to bewail it; when nature decayes, men go more stooping, and 'tis a signe some such decay is in thee, that thou canst not as thou usest, lift up thy heart from earthly to spiritual duties. They were intended as helps against temptation, and therefore when they prove snares to us there is a distemper on us. If we waxe worse after sleep, the body is not right, because the nature of sleep is to refresh; if exercise indisposeth for work, the reason is in our bodies. So here.

Secondly, when thy diligence in thy particular calling is more selfish, possibly thou hast wrought in thy shop, and set close at thy study, in obedience to the command chiefly; thy carnal interests have swayed but little with thee, but now thou tradest more for thy self, and lesse for God. O have a care of this.

Thirdly, when thou canst not bear the disappointment of thy carnal ends in thy particular calling, as thou hast done; thou workest and gettest little of the world, thou preacheest and art not much esteemed, and thou knowest not well how to brook these. The time was thou couldest retire thy selfe into God, and make up all thou didst want elsewhere in him; but now thou art not so well satisfied with thy estate, rank and condition; thy heart is fingering for more of these then God allows thee; this shews declining; children are harder to be pleased, and old men (whose decay of nature makes them more froward, and in a manner children the second time) then others; labour therefore to recover thy decaying grace, and as this lock grows, so thy strength with it will, to acquiesce in the disposure of Gods Providence.



CHAP. IV.

A word of counsel for the recovery of declining grace.

VVE come now to give a few directions to the Christian, how to recover decaying grace.

Enquire faithfully into the cause of thy declining. The Christians armour decays two ways; either by violent battery, when the Christian is overcome by temptations to sin, or else by neglecting to forbish and scoure it with the use of those means which are as oile, to keep it clean and bright. Now enquire, which of these have been the cause of thy decay. It is like, both concur.

First, if thy grace be weakened by any blow, given it by any sin committed by thee, there then lies a threefold duty upon thee towards the recovery of it.

First, thou art to renew thy repentance. It is Christs counsel, *Rev. 2. 5. to Ephesus, Repent and do thy first works*; where it is not only commanded as a duty, but prescribed as a means for her recovery; as if he had said, Repent, that thou mayest do thy first works. So, *Hosea 14. 2.* The Lord sets back-sliding *Israel* about this work, bidding her *take words and turn to the Lord*; and, *v. 4.* he then tells her he'll take her in hand to recover her of her sins, *I will heal their back-slidings*; a repenting soule is under promise of healing; and therefore (Christian) go and search thy heart, as thou wouldest do thy house, if some thief or murderer lay hid in it, to cut thy throat in the night; and when thou hast found the sin that has done thee the mischief, then labour to fill thy heart with shame for it, and indignation against it, and so go big with sorrow, and cast it forth before the Lord in a heart-breaking confession; better thou do
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this, then Satan do thy errand to God for thee.

2. Secondly, when thou hast renewed thy repentance, forget not, delay not then to renew thy faith on the promise for pardon. Repentance, that is like purging physick to evacuate the peccant humour, but if faith come not presently with its restorative, the poor creature will never get heart, or recover his strength. A soul may die of a fluxe of sorrow as well as of sin; faith hath an incarnating vertue, as they say of some strengthening meat, it feeds upon the promise, and *that is perfect, converting* (or rather restoring) *the soule*, Psal. 19. 7. Though thou wert pined to skin and bones, all thy strength wasted, yet faith would soon recruit thee, and enable every grace to perform its office chearfully. Faith sucks peace from the promise, call'd *peace in believing*; from peace flows joys, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God*, Rom. 5. 1. and v. 2. *We rejoyce in the hope of glory*; and joy affords strength: *The joy of the Lord is our strength*.

3. Thirdly, back both these with a daily endeavour to mortifie those lusts which most prevail over thy grace. Weeds cannot thrive, and the flowers also, when grace doth not act vigorously and freely, conclude it is oppress'd with some contrary lust, which weighs down its spirits, and makes them lumpish; even as superfluous humours do load the natural spirits in our bodies, that we have little joy to stir or go about any businesse till they be evacuated; and therefore ply this work close, it is not a dayes work or two in the yeare, (like Physick at spring and fall) nothing more vain, then to make a buffle, as the Papiists do at their *Lent*; or as some unsound Professours among our selves, who seem to bestir themselves before a Sacrament or day of fasting, with a great noise of zeal, and then let those very lusts live peaceably in them all the yeare after. No, this is child-play to do and undo; thou must *mortifie daily thy lusts by the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 13. Follow but this work conscionably in thy Christian course, making it thy endeavour, (as constantly as the labouring man goes out every day to work in the field where his calling lies) to watch thy heart, and use all means for the discovery of sin, and as it breaks forth to be humbled for it, and be chopping at the root of it with this axe of mortification; and thou shalt see by the blessing of God what a change for the better

ter there will be in the constitution of thy grace; thou who art now so poor, so pale, that thou art afraid to see thy own face long in the glasse of thy own conscience, shall then reflect with joy upon thy own conscience, and dare to converse with thy self without those surprizals of horreur and feare, which before did appale thee; thy grace, though it shall not be thy rejoycing, yet it will be thy evidence for Christ, in whom it is: and lead thee in with boldnesse to lay claim to him, while the loose Christian, whose grace is over-grown with lusts (for want of this weeding-hook) shall stand trembling at the door, questioning whether his grace be true or no; and from that doubt of his welcome.

Secondly, if upon enquiry thou findest that thy Armour decays, rather for want of scouring, then by any blow from sin presumptuously committed (as that is most common and ordinary, rust will soon spoil the best armour, and negligence give grace its bane, as well as grosse sins,) then apply thy self to the use of those means which God hath appointed for the strengthening grace; if the fire goes out by taking off the wood, what way to preserve it, but by laying it on again?

First, I shall send thee to the Word of God, be more frequently conversant with it. *David* tells us, where he renewed his spiritual life, and got his soul so oft into a heavenly heat, when grace in him began to chill. *The Word*, (he tells us) quickened him. This was the Sunny bank he sat under. The Word draws forth the Christians grace, by presenting every one with an object suitable to act upon, this is of great power to rouse them up; as the coming in of a friend, makes us, (though sleepy before) shake off all drowinesse to enjoy his company. Affections they are actuated when their object is before them; if we love a person, this is excited by sight of him, or any thing that minds us of him; if we hate one, our blood riseth much more against him when before us. Now the Word brings the Christian graces and their object together. Here love may delight her self with the beholding Christ, who is set out to life there in all his love and lovelinesse; here the Christian may see his sins in a glasse that will not flatter him; and can there any godly sorrow be in the heart, any hatred of sin, and not come forth, while the man is reading what they cost Christ for him?

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Secondly, from the Word go to meditation; this is as bel-
lowes to the fire; that grace which lies choak't and eaten up for
want of exercise, will by this be cleared and break forth, while
thou art musing this fire will burn, and thy heart grow hot with-
in thee, according to the nature of the subject thy thoughts
dwell upon: resolve therefore (Christian) to enclose some time
from all worldly suitours, wherein thou mayest every day (if
possible) at least take a view of the most remarkable occur-
rences that have past between God and thee, First, ask thy soul what
takings it hath had that day, what mercies heaven hath sent into
thee? and do not when thou hast ask't the question (like *Pilate*)
go out; but stay till thy soul has made report of Gods gracious
dealings to thee: and (if thou beest wise to observe, and faithful
to relate them) thy conscience must tell thee, that the cock was
never turn'd, the breast of mercy never put up all the day, yea,
while thou art viewing these fresh mercies, telling over this new
coine, hot out of the mint of Gods bounty, ancient mercies
they will come crowding in upon thee, and call for a place in
thy thoughts, and tell thee what God hath done for thee
moneths and years ago (and indeed old debts should not be
paid last) give them (Christian) all a hearing one time or an-
other, and thou shalt see how they will work upon thy inge-
nious spirit. It is with the Christian in this case, as with some
Merchants servant that keeps his Masters cash, he tells his Mas-
ter he hath a great summe of his by him, and desires he would
discharge him of it, and see how his accounts stand, but he can
never finde him at leisure. There is a great treasure of mercy
always in the Christians hands, and conscience is oft calling
the Christian to take the account, and see what God has done
for him; but seldom it is he can finde time to tell his mercies o-
ver; and is it any wonder that such should go behind-hand in
their spiritual estate, who take no more notice what the graci-
ous dealings of God are with them? how can he be thankful
that seldom thinks what he receives? or patient when God af-
flicts, that wants one of the most powerful arguments to pacifie
a mutinous spirit in trouble, and that is taken from the abundant
good we receive at the hands of the Lord as well as a little evil?
how can such a soules love flame to God, that is kept at such a
distance from the mercies of God, which are fuel to it? and the
like

like might be said of all the other graces. Secondly, reflect upon thy self, and bestow a few serious thoughts upon thy own behaviour, what it hath been towards God and man all along the day. Ask thy soul, as *Elisha* his servant, Whence comest thou, O my soul? where hast thou been? what hast thou done for God this day, and how? and when thou goest about this, look that thou neither beest taken off from a through search (as *Jacob* was by *Rachels* specious excuse,) nor be found to cocker thy self, (as *Eli* his sons) when thou shalt upon enquiry take thy heart tardy in any part of thy duty; take heed what thou doest, for thou judgest for God, who receives the wrong by thy sin, and therefore will do himself justice if thou wilt not.

Thirdly, from meditation go to prayer; indeed a soul in meditation is on his way to prayer; that duty leads the Christian to this, and this brings help to that; when the Christian has done his utmost by meditation to excite his graces, and chase his spirit into some divine heat, he knows all this is but to lay the wood in order. The fire must come from above to kindle, and this must be fetch't by prayer. They say, stars have greatest influences when they are in conjunction with the Sunne; then sure the graces of a Saint should never work more powerfully then in prayer, for then he is in the nearest conjunction and communion with God. That Ordinance which hath such power with God, must needs have a mighty influence on our selves. It will not let God rest, but raiseh him up to his peoples succour, and is it any wonder if it be a means to rouse up and excite the Christians grace? how oft do we see a dark cloud upon *Devils* spirit at the beginning of his prayer, which by that time he is a little warme in his work, begins to clear up, and before he ends breaks forth into high actings of faith and acclamations of praise only here (Christian) take heed of formal praying, this is as baneful to grace as not praying. A plaster though proper and of soveraign vertue, yet if it be laid on cold, may do more hurt then good.

Fourthly, to all the former joyn fellowship and communion with the Saints thou livest amongst. No wonder to hear a house is robb'd that stands far from neighbours; he that walks in communion of Saints, he travels in company, he dwells in a City where one house keeps up another, to which

Jerusalem is compared. 'Tis observable concerning the house in whose ruins *Jebs* children were entombed, that a winde came from the wildernesse and smote the foure corners of it; it seems it stood alone; the devil knows what he does in hindering this great Ordinance of communion of Saints; in doing this he hinders the progresse of grace, yea, brings that which Christians have into a declining wasting state. The Apostle couples those two duties close together, *to hold fast our Profession, and to consider one another, and provoke unto love and to good works, Heb. 10. 23, 24.* Indeed it is a dangerous step to Apostasie, to forsake the communion of Saints; hence 'tis said of *Demas, he hath left us, and embraced the present world.* O what mischief has Satan done us in these few late yeares, in this one particular? what is become of this communion of Saints? where are there two or three to be found that can agree to walk together? those that could formerly suffer together, cannot sit together at their Fathers table, can hardly pray one with or one for another; the breath of one Christian is strange to another that once lay in his bosome; — *This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.*



CHAP. V.

The words opened, and what is meant by the evil day.

That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done &c.

WE come to the Argument with which the Apostle urgeth the exhortation, and that is double.

The first hath respect to the houre of battel, *that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.*

The second to the happy issue of the war, which will crown the Christian thus arm'd, and that is certain victory, *and having done all stand.*

First of the first, *That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day:* But what is this evil day? Some take this evil day to comprehend the whole life of a Christian here below in this vale of tears; and then the argument runs thus: Take to your selves the whole Armour of God, that you may be able to persevere to the end of your life, which you will finde, as it were, one continued day of trouble and trial. Thus *Jacob* draws a black line over his whole life, *few and evil have the days of my life been,* Gen. 47. What day shines so faire that over-casts not before night, yea, in which the Christian meets not with some shower or other, enough to deserve the name of an evil day? Every day hath its portion, yea, proportion; *Sufficient is the evil of the day.* We need not borrow and take up sorrows upon use of the morrow, to make up our present load; as we read of daily bread, so of a daily crosse, *Luke* 9.23. which we are bid to take, not to make, (we need not make crosses for our selves, as we are prone to do) God in his Providence will provide one for us, and we are bid to take it up, but we hear nothing of laying it down, till crosse and we lie down together; our troubles and our lives are coetaneous, live and die together:

here when joy comes sorrow is at its heel, staffe and rod go together. *Job* himself, (whose prosperity the devil so grudg'd, and set forth in all his bravery and pomp, *Job* 1.10. as if his Sun had no shadow) heare what account this good man gives of this his most flourishing time, *chap.* 3.26. *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet.* There were some troubles that broke his rest, when his bed was (to thinking) as soft as heart could wish, even now this good man tosses and tumbles from one side to the other, and is not quiet. If one should have come to *Job* and blessed him with his happy condition, and said, Surely, *Job*, thou couldest be content with what thou hast for thy portion, if thou mightest have all this settled on thee and thy heires after thee, he would have said, as once *Luther*, that God should not put him off with these. Such is the Saints state in this bottome, that their very life here, and all the pompous entertainments of it, they are their crosse, because they detain them from their crown. We need nothing to make our life an evil day more then our absence from our chief good, which cannot be recompenced by the world, nor enjoyed with it. Only this goodnesse there is in this evil, that it is short, our life is but an evil day, it will not last long, and sure it was mercy that 'God hath abridged so much of the terme of mans life in these last dayes, wherein so much of Christ and Heaven are discovered, that it would have put the Saints patience hard to it, to have known so much of the upper worlds glory, and then be kept so long from it, as the Fathers in the first age were. O comfort one another (Christians) with this, though your life be evil with troubles, yet 'tis short; a few steps, and ye are out of the rain. There is great difference between a Saint in regard of the evils he meets with, and the wicked; as two travellers riding contrary ways, (both taken in the rain and wet) but one rides from the raine, and so is soon out of the showre; but the other rides into the rainy corner, the further he goes, the worse he is. The Saint he meets with troubles as well as the wicked, but he is soon out of the showre; when death comes he has faire weather; but the wicked, the further he goes the worse; what he meets with here, is but a few drops, the great storme is the last. The pouring out of Gods wrath shall be in hell, where all the deeps of horreur are opened, both from above of Gods righteous

teous fury, and from beneath of their own accusing and tormenting consciences.

Secondly, others take the phrase in a more restrained sense, to denote those particular seasons of our life, wherein more especially we meet with afflictions and sufferings. *Beza* reads it *tempore aduerso*, in the time of our adversity. Though our whole life be evil, if compared with Heavens blisseful state, our clearest day night to that glorious morning; yet one part of our life compared with another may be called good, and the other evil, we have our vicissitudes here. The Providences of God to his Saints here, while on this low bottome of earth are mixt and particoloured, as was signified by the speckled horses in *Zecharias's* vision; Red and white, peace and warre, joy and sorrow checker our dayes. Earth is a middle place betwixt heaven and hell, and so is our state here, it partakes of both: we go up hill and down till we get to our journeys end, yea, we find the deepest slough nearest our fathers house, Death, I mean, into which all the other troubles of our life fall, as it streams into some great river, and with which they all end, and are swallowed up. This being the comprehensive evil, I conceive to be meant here, being made remarkable by a double article *ev tñ hūa a tñ πονηρῇ*, that day, that evil day, not excluding those other dayes of tribulation which intervene. These are but so many petty deaths, every one snatching away a piece of our lives with them, or like Pages sent before to usher in this King of terrors that comes behinde.

The phrase being opened, let us consider the strength of this first argument, with which the Apostle reinforceth his exhortation of taking to our selves the whole Armour of God, and that consists in three weighty circumstances.

First, the nature and quality of this day of affliction, it is an evil day. 1.

Secondly, the unavoidable necessity of this evil day of affliction implied in the forme of speech, *that you may withstand in the evil day*. He shuts out all hope of escaping, as if he had said, you have no way but to withstand, please not your selves with thoughts of shunning battel; the evil day must come, be you arm'd or not arm'd. 2.

Thirdly, the necessity of this armour, *to withstand*. As we 3.

we cannot run from it, so not bear up before it, and oppose the force which will be made against us, except clad with Armour. These would afford several points, but for brevity we shall lay them together in one Conclusion.



CHAP. IV.

Sheweth that the day of affliction is evil, and in what respects, as also unavoidable, and why to be prepared for.

Dech. **I**T behoves every one to arme and prepare himself for the evil day of affliction and death, which unavoidably he must co-suffer with. The point hath three branches.

First, the day of affliction and death is an evil day.

Secondly, this evil day is unavoidable.

Thirdly, it behoves every one to provide for this evil day.

I. First of the first branch, the day of affliction, especially death is an evil day. Here we must shew how affliction is evil, and how not.

I. First, it is not morally or intrinsically evil, if it were evil in this sense; First, God could not be the Author of it, his nature is so pure, that no such evil can come from him, any more then the Sunnes light can make night. But this evil of affliction he voucheth for his own act. *Against this family do I devise an evil*, Mic. 3. 2. yea more. he impropriates it so to himself as that he will not have us think any can do us evil beside himself. 'Tis the Prerogative he glories in, that there is no evil in the City, but it is of his doing, *Amos 3. 6.* And well it is for the Saints that their crosses are all made in heaven. they would not else be so fitted to their backs as they are. But for the evil of sin, he disownes it with a strict charge, that we lay not this brat, which is begotten by Satan upon our impure hearts, at his door

door. *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man,* James 1.13.

Secondly, if affliction were thus intrinsically evil, it could in no respect be the object of our desire, which sometimes it is, and may be. We are to choose affliction rather than sin, yea, the greatest affliction before the least sin. *Moses* chose affliction with the people of God, rather than the pleasures of sinne for a season. We are bid rejoyce when we fall into divers temptations, that is, afflictions.

But in what respects then may the day of affliction be called evil?

First, as it is grievous to sense in Scripture, evil is oft put as contradictory to joy and comfort: *We looked for peace, and behold no good.* A merry heart is called a good heart, a sad spirit an evil spirit, because nature hath an abhorrency to all that opposeth its joy, and this every affliction doth, more or lesse. No affliction, while present, is joyous, but grievous, it hath, like physick, an unpleasant farewell to the sense. Therefore *Solomon*, speaking of the evil dayes of sickness, expresseth them to be to distasteful to nature, that we shall say, *We have no pleasure in them.* They take away the joy of our life. Natural joy is a true flower of the Sun of prosperity, it opens and shuts with it. 'Tis true indeed, the Saints never have more joy then in their affliction, but this comes in upon another score; they have a good God that sends it in, or else they would be as sadly on it as others. 'Tis no more natural for comfort to spring from afflictions, then for grapes to grow on thornes, or Manna in the wilderness. The Israelites might have look't long enough for such bread, if heaven had not miraculously rained it down. God chooseth this season to make the Omnipotency of his love the more conspicuous. As *Elijah* to add to the miracle, first causeth water in abundance to be poured upon the wood and sacrifice, so much as to fill the trench, and then brings fire from heaven by his prayer, to lick it up: Thus God poures out the flood of affliction upon his children, and then kindles that inward joy in their bosomes which licks up all their sorrow, yea, he makes the very waters of affliction they float on, add a further sweetnesse to the musick of their spiritual joy, but still it is God that is good, and affliction that is evil.

I.

Job 12.11.

Secondly, the day of affliction is an evil day, as it is an unwelcome remembrancer of what sinful evils have passed in our lives. It revives the memory of old sins, which, it may be, were buried many years ago in the grave of forgetfulness. The night of affliction is the time when such ghosts use to walk in mens consciences; and as the darknesse of the night addes to the horror of any scareful object, so doth the state of affliction (which is it self uncomfortable) adde to the terrour of our sins, then remembred. Never did the Patriarchs sin look so ghastly on them, as when it recoil'd upon them in their distresse, *Gen. 42.21*. The sinner then hath more real apprehensions of wrath then at another time, affliction approximates judgement, yea, it is interpreted by him, as a Pursivant sent to call him presently before God, and therefore must needs beget a woful confusion and consternation in his spirit. O that men would think of this, how they could bear the sight of their sins, and a Rehearsal Sermon of all their wayes in that day! That is the blessed man indeed, who can with the Prophet then look on them, and triumph over them. This indeed is a dark parable, as he calls it, few can skill of it, as *Pf. 94.3,4*. *I will open my dark saying upon the harp; wherefore should I fear in the day of evil, when the iniquity of my heels compasseth me about?*

3. Thirdly, the day of affliction makes discovery of much evil to be in the heart, which was not seen before. Affliction shakes and roiles the creature, if any sediment be at the bottome, it will appear then. Sometimes it discovers the heart to be quite naught, that before had some seeming good, these suds wash off the hypocrites paint. *Natura vexata prodit seipsam*. When corrupt nature is vext, it shews it self, and some afflictions do that to purpose. We reade of such as are offended when persecution comes, they fall quite out with their Profession, because it puts them to such cost and trouble; others in their distresse, that curse their God, *Isa. 8.21*. It is impossible for a naughty heart to think well of an afflicting God. The hireling if his Master takes up a staffe to beat him, throws down his work and runs away; and so doth a false heart serve God. Yea, even where the person is gracious, corruption is oft found to be stronger, and grace weaker then they were thought to be. *Peter*, who set out so valiantly at first to walk on the sea, the winde doth but rise and

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he begins to sink ; now he sees there was more unbelief in his heart then he before suspected. Sharp afflictions are to the soul as a driving raine to the house ; we know not that there are such crannies and holes in the house, till we see it drop down here and there. Thus we perceive not how unmortified this corruption, nor how weak that grace is, till we are thus search'd, and made more fully to know what is in our hearts by such trials. This is the reason why none have such humble thoughts of themselves, and such pitiful and forbearing thoughts towards others in their infirmities, as those who are most acquainted with afflictions, they meet with so many foiles in their conflicts, as make them carry a low faile in respect of their own grace, and a tender respect to their brethren, more ready to pity then censure them in their weaknesses.

Fourthly, this is the season when the evil one, Satan comes to tempt. What we finde call'd the time of tribulation, *Mat.* 13. 22. we finde in the same parable, *Luk.* 8. 13. call'd the time of temptation. Indeed they both meet, seldome doth God afflict us, but Satan addeth temptation to our wilderness ; *This is your houre* (saith Christ) *and the power of darknesse*, *Luke* 22. 53. Christs sufferings from man, and temptation from the devil came together. *Esau*, who hated his brother for the blessing, said in his heart ; *The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I kill my brother*, *Gen.* 27. 41. Times of affliction are the days of mourning, those Satan waits for to do us a mischief in.

Fifthly and lastly, the day of affliction hath oft an evil event and issue, and in this respect proves an evil day indeed. All is well (we say) that ends well, the product of afflictions on the Christian is good, the rod with which they are corrected, yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and therefore they can call their afflictions good, that is a good instrument that lets out only the bad blood. *It is good for me that I was afflicted*, saith *David*. I have read of a holy woman, who used to compare her afflictions to her children, they both put her to great pain in the bearing, but as she knew not which of her children to have been without (for al the trouble in the bringing forth) so neither which of her afflictions she could have missed, notwithstanding the sorrow they put her to in the enduring. But to the wicked the issue is

sad, first in regard of sin, they leave them worse, more impenitent, hardened in sin, and outrageous in their wicked practices. Every plague on *Egypt* added to the plague of hardnesse on *Pharaohs* heart: he that for some while could beg prayers of *Moses* for himself, at last comes to that passe that he threatens to kill him if he come at him any more. O what a prodigious height do we see many come to in sin, after some great sicknesse or other judgement? Children do not more shoot up in their bodily stature after an ague, then they in their lusts after afflictions. O how greedy and ravenous are they after their prey, when they once get off their clog and chain from their heels! when physick works not kindly, it doth not only leave the disease uncured, but the poison of the physick staves in the body also. Many appear thus poisoned by their afflictions, by the breaking out of their lusts afterward. Secondly, in regard of sorrow, every affliction on a wicked person produceth another, and that a greater then it self. The Greatest comes the last, which shall rive him fit for the fire, the sinner is whipp't from affliction to affliction, as the vagrant from Constable to Constable, till at last he comes to hell, his proper place, and settled abode, where all sorrows will meet in one that is endlesse.

2.

The second branch of the point follows. This evil day is unavoidable. We may as well stop the chariot of the Sun, when posting to night, and chase away the shades of the evening, as escape this houre of darknesse, that is coming upon us all. *None hath power over the Spirit to retain it, neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war,* Eccl. 8. 8. Among men 'tis possible to get off when prest for the wars, by pleading priviledge of yeares, estate, weaknesse of body, protection from the Prince, and the like, or if all these fail, possibly the sending another in our room, or a bribe given in the hand may serve the turn. But in this war the prest is so strict, that there is no dispensation; *David* could willingly have gone for his son, we hear him crying, *Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son;* but he will not be taken, that young Gallant must go himself. We must in our own person come into the field, and look death in the face. Some indeed we finde so fond as to promise themselves immunity from this day, as if they had an enforcing office in their breast. They say they have made a Covenant with death,

death, and with hell they are at an agreement, when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto them. And now (like debtors that have feed the Serjeant,) they walk abroad boldly, and fear no arrest. But God tells them as fast as they binde he will loose: *Your Covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand;* and how should it, if God will not set his seal to it? There is a divine Law for this evil day, which came in force upon *Adam's* first sin, that laid the fatal knife to the throat of mankind, which hath opened a fluce to let out his heart-blood ever since. God to prevent all escape hath sown the seeds of death in our very constitution and nature, so that we can as soon run from our selves, as run from death. We need no feller to come with a hand of violence, and hew us down^d; there is in the tree a worme which grows out of its own substance that will destroy it, so in us, those infirmities of nature that will bring us down to the dust. Our death was bred, when our life was first conceived; and as a breeding woman cannot hinder the houre of her travel, (that follows in nature upon the other) so neither can man hinder the bringing forth of death with which his life is big. All the pains and aches man feels in his life are but so many *signi- gultus morientis nature*, groans of dying nature; they tell him his dissolution is at hand. Beest thou a Prince sitting in all thy state and pomp, death dare enter thy Palace, and come through all thy guards, to deliver the fatal message it hath from God to thee, yea, runs its dagger to thy heart? Wert thou compassed with a Colledge of Doctors consulting thy health, Art and Nature both must deliver thee up when that comes. Even when thy strength is firmest, and thou eatest thy bread with a merry heart, that very food which nourisheth thy life gives thee withal an earnest of death, as it leaves those dregs in thee which will in time procure the same. O how unavoidable must this evil day of death be, when that very staffe knocks us down to the grave at last, which our life leans on, and is preserved by? God owes a debt both to the first *Adam* and second; to the first he owes the wages of his sin: to the second, the reward of his sufferings. The place for full payment of both is the other world, so that except death comes to convey man thither, the wicked who are the posterity of the first *Adam*, will misse of that

full pay for their sins, which the threatening makes due debt, and engageth God to perform; The godly also who are the seed of Christ, these should not receive the whole purchase of his blood, which he would never have shed but upon the credit of that promise of eternal life, which God gave him for them before the world began. This is the reason why God hath made this day so sure, in it he dischargeth both bonds.

3. The third branch of the point follows, That it heloves every one to prepare, and effectually to provide for this evil day, which so unavoidably impends us: And that upon a twofold account; First, in point of duty. Secondly, in point of wisdom.

1. First, in point of duty. First, it is upon our allegiance to the great God, that we provide and arme our selves against this day. Suppose a subject were trusted with one of his Princes castles, and this man should hear that a puissant enemy was coming to lay siege to this castle, yet takes no care to lay in armes and provision for his defence, and so 'tis lost; how could such a one be clear'd of treason? doth he not basely betray the place, and with it his Princes honour into the enemies hand? Our souls are this castle which we are every one to keep for God, We have certain Intelligence that Satan hath a design upon them, and the time when he intends to come with all his powers of darkness, to be that evil day. Now as we would be found true to our trust, we are obliged to stand upon our defence, and store our selves with what may enable us to make a vigorous resistance.

2. Secondly, we are obliged to provide for that day, as a suitable return for, and improvement of the opportunities and meanes, which God affords us for this very end. We cannot without shameful ingratitude to God, make waste of those helps God gives us in order to this great work. Every one would cry out upon him that should basely spend that money upon riot in prison, which was sent him to procure his deliverance out of prison; And do we not blush to bestow those talents upon our lusts and Satan; which God graciously indulgeth to deliver us from them, and his rage in a dying houre? what have we Bibles for, Ministers and preaching for? if we mean not to furnish our selves by them with armour for the evil day? In a word
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what is the intent of God in lengthening out our dayes, and continuing us some while here in the land of the living? was it that we might have time to revel, or rather ravel out upon the pleasure of this vain world? Doth he give us our precious time to be employed in catching such butterflies as these earthly honours and riches are? It cannot be. Masters do not use (if wise) to let their servants about such work, as will not pay for the candle they burn in doing it. And truly nothing lesse then the glorifying of God, and saving our soules at last can be worth the precious time we spend here. The great God hath a greater end then most think in this dispensation; If we would judge aright, we should take his own interpretation of his actions; and the Apostle *Peter* bids us, *count that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation*, 2 Pet. 3 15. which place he quotes out of *Paul*, (as to the sense, though not in the same forme of words) which in *Rom.* 2.4. are these, *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?* From both places we are taught what is the minde of God, and the language he speaks to us in, by every moments patience, and inch of time that is granted to us. It is a space given for repentance. God sees (as we are) death and judgement could bring no good newes to us, we are in no case to welcome the evil day, and therefore mercy stands up to plead for the poor creature in Gods bosome, and begs a little time more may be added to its life, that by this indulgence it may be provoked to repent before he be called to the bar. Thus we come by every day that is continually super-added to our time on earth. And doth not this lay a strong obligation on us to lay out every point of this time, unto the same end 'tis begged for?

Secondly, in point of wisdom. The wisdom of a man appears most eminently in two things.

First, in the matter of his choice and chief care.

Secondly, in a due timing of this his choice and care.

First, a wise man makes choice of that for the subject of his chief care and endeavour. which is of greatest importance and consequence to him: fools and children only are intent about toys and trifles. They are as busie and earnest in making of a house of dirt or cards, as *Selem* was in making of his Temple. Those
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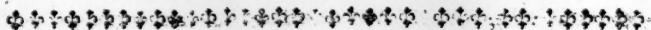
poor bables are as adequate to their foolish apprehensions, as great enterprises are to wise men. Now such is the importance of the evil day, especially that of death, that it proves a man a fool, or wise, as he comports himself to it. The end specifies every action, and gives it the name of good or evil, of wise or foolish. The evil day of death is, as the end of our dayes, so to be the end of all the actions of our life. Such will our life be found at last, as it hath been in order to this one day. If the severall items of our life (counsels and projects that we have pursued) when they shall then be cast up, will amount to a blessed death, then we shall appear to be wise men indeed; but, if after all our goodly plots and policies for other things, we be unprovided for that houre, we must be content to die fooles at last, and no such fool as the dying fool. The Christian goes for the fool (in the worlds account) while he lives; but when death comes, the wise world will then confesse they mis-call'd him, and shall take it to themselves; *We fooles counted his life to be madnesse, and his end to be without honour. But how is he now numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saint? therefore have we erred from the way of truth,* Wisd. 5. 4, 5. The place is Apocryphal, but sinners will finde the matter of it Canonical. 'Tis true indeed, Saints are out-witted by the world in the things of the world, and no marvel, neither doth it impeach their wisdom any more then it doth a Scholars, to be excel'd by the Cobler in his mean trade. Nature, where it intends higher excellencies, is more carelesse in those things that are inferiour, as we see in man, who (being made to excel the beasts in a rational soul) is himself excelled by some beast or other in all his senses. Thus the Christian may well be surpass in matters of worldly commerce, because he hath a nobler object in his eye, that makes him converse with the things of the world in a kinde of non-attendance; he is not much careful in these matters if he can die well at last, and be justified for a wise man at the day of the resurrection, all is well; he thinks it is not manners, to be unwilling to stay so long for the clearing of his wisdom, as God can wait for the vindicating of his own glorious Nature, which will not appear in its glory till that day, when he will convince the ungodly of their hard thoughts and speeches of him. Then they shall, till then they will not be convinced.

Secondly, a wife man labours duly to time his care and endeavour for the attaining of what he propoſeth. 'Tis the fool that comes when the market is done; as the evil day is of great concernment in reſpect of its event, ſo the placing of our care for it in the right ſeaſon, is of chief importance, and that ſure muſt be before it comes. There are more doors then one, at which the meſſenger may enter that brings evil tydings to us; and at which he will knock, we know not; we know not where we ſhall be arreſted, whether at bed or board, whether at home, or in the field, whether among our friends that will counſel and comfort us, or among our enemies that will adde weight to our ſorrow by their cruelty. We know not when, whether by day or night, (many of us) not, whether in the morning, noon or evening of our age. As he calls to work at all times of the day, ſo he doth to bed; may be while thou art praying or preaching, and it would be ſad to go away profaning them, & the Name of God in them; poſſibly when thou art about worſe work, death may ſtrike thy quaffing cup out of thy hand, while thou art fitting in the Alehouſe with thy jovial mates, or meet thee as thou art reeling home, and make ſome ditch thy grave, that as thou livedſt like a beaſt, ſo thou ſhouldeſt die like a beaſt. In a word, we know not the kinde of evil God will uſe as the inſtrument to ſtab us; whether ſome bloody hand of violence ſhall do it, or a diſeaſe out of our bowels and bodies; whether ſome acute diſeaſe, or ſome lingring ſickneſſe; whether ſuch a ſickneſſe as ſhall ſlay the man while the body is alive, (I mean take the head and deprive us of our reaſon) or not; whether ſuch noiſom troubles, as ſhall make our friends afraid to let us breath on them, or themſelves look on us; whether they ſhall be afflictions aggravated with Satans temptations, and the terrours of our own affrighted conſciences or not; who knowes where, when, or what the evil day ſhall be? therefore doth God conceal theſe, that we ſhould provide for all. *Ceſar* would never let his ſouldiers know, when or whither he meant to march. The knowing of theſe would torment us with diſtracting fear, the not knowing them ſhould awaken us to a providing care. It is an ill time to calk the ſhip when at ſea, tumbling up and down in a ſtorme; this ſhould have been look't to, when on her ſeat in the harbour. And as bad it is to begin to trim a

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soul for heaven, when tossing upon a sick bed. Things that are done in a hurry are seldome done well; A man call'd out of his bed at midnight with a dismal fire on his house-top, cannot stand to dresse himself in order as at another time; but runs down with one stocking half on may be, and the other not on at all. Those poor creatures I am afraid go in as ill a dresse into another world, who begin to provide for it, when on a dying bed conscience calls them up with a cry of hell-fire in their bosomes. But (alas!) they must go, though they have not time to put their armour on. And so they are put to repent at leisure in hell, of their shuffling up a repentance in haste here. We come to the Application of the Point.



CHAP. VII.

The Application of the Point.

Use 1.

First, it reproves those that are so far from providing for the evil day, that they will not suffer any thoughts of that day to stay with them, they are as unwilling to be led into a discourse of this subject, as a childe to be carried into the dark, and there left. It is a death to them to think of death, or that which leads to it. As some foolishly think, they must needs die presently when they have made their Will, so these think they hasten that sorrowful day by musing on it. The meditation of it is no more welcom to them, then the company of *Moses* was to *Pharaoh*. Therefore they say to it, as he to *Moses*, *Get thee from me, and let me see thy face no more*; the fear of it makes them to butcher and make away all those thoughts which conscience stirs up concerning it. And at last they get such a mastery of their consciences, that they arrive to a kinde of Atheisme, it is as rare to have them think or speak of such matters, as to see a flie busie in Winter. Nothing now but what is frolick and jocund is entertained by them. If any such thoughts come as prophesie mirth and

and carnal content, these (as right with their hearts) are taken up into the chariot to sit with them, but all other are commanded to go behinde. Alas, poor-spirited wretches! something might be said for you, if this evil day of death and judgement were such *entia rationis*, as had no foundation or being but what our fancies give them, (such troubles there are in the world, which have all their evil from our thoughts, when we are disquieted with the scornes and reproaches of men, did we but not think of them, they were nothing) but thy banishing the thoughts of this evil day from thy minde, will be a poor short relief. Thou canst neither hinder its coming, nor take away its sting when it comes by thy sleighting it. Thou art like a Passenger in a ship, sleep or wake thou art going thy voyage. Thou doest but like that silly bird, who pnts her head into a reed, and then thinks she is safe from the Fowler, because she sees him not. Thou art a faire mark for Gods vengeance, he sees thee, and is taking his aime at thee, when thou seest not him. yea, thou puttest thy self under an inevitable necessity of perishing, by not thinking of this day. The first step to our safety, is consideration of our danger.

It reproves these, who if they think of the evil day, yet it is so far off, that it is to little purpose. They will be sure to set it at such a distance from them, as shall take away the force of the meditation, that it shall not strike them down in the deep sense and fear of it. That cannon, which if we stood at the mouth of it, would shatter limb from limb, will not so much as scare them that get out of its reach. The further we put the evil day, the weaker impression it makes on us. 'Tis true (say sinners) it cannot be help't, we owe a debt to nature, it must be paid, sicknesse will come, and death follow on that, and judgement brings up the rear of both. But (alas!) they look not for these guests yea, they prophesie of these things a great while hence to come. Many a faire day they hope will intervene. Thus men are very kind to themselves. First, they wish it may be long before it comes, and then because they would have it so, they are bold to promise themselves it shall be so; and when once they have made this promise, no wonder if they then live after the rate of their vain hopes putting off the stating of their accounts, till the winter-evening of old age, when they shall not have such allurements to gad a-

broad from the pleasures of this life. O then they will do great matters to fit them for the evil day. Bold man ! who gave thee leave to cut out such large thongs of that time which is not thine but Gods ? Who makes the Leate, the Tenant, or the Landlord ? or dost thou forget thou farmest thy life, and art not an Owner ? This is the device of Satan, to make you delay, whereas a present expectation of the evil day would not let you sit still unprepared. O why do you let your soules from their work, make them idle and rest from their burdens, by telling them of long life, while death chops in upon you unawares ? O what shame will your whorish hearts be put to (that now say, your husband is gone as far off, you may fill your selves with loves) if he should come before he is look't for, and finde you in bed with lussis ? And let me tell you, sudden destruction is threatened, especially to such secure ones. Reade, *Mat. 24. 48, 50, 51.* where 'tis denounced against that sort of sinners, who please themselves with their Lords delaying his coming, that *the Lord of that servant shall come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and in an houre that he is not aware of.* Indeed God must go out of his ordinary road of dealing with sinners, if such 'scape a sudden ruine. One is bold to challenge any to shew a President in Scripture of any that are branded for security, that some remarkable yea, sudden judgement did not surprise. *Sodom*, how soon after a Sun-shine morning did the Heavens thicken, and bury them in a few houres, (by a storme of fire) in their own ashes ? *Carelesse Laish* cut off before they almost think of it. *Agag*, when he saw the clouds of his fears break, and fair weather was in his countenance, they return immediately upon him, and shut him up in death ; he is presently hewen in pieces. *Amalek* slaughtered by *David*, before the triumph of their late victory was cold. *Nebuchadnezzar* strutting himself in his Palace with this bravado in his mouth, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built?* and before he can get the words out of his throat, there is another voice falling from heaven, saying, *O King, to thee be it spoken, thy Kingdome is departed from thee: and the same houre it was fulfilled,* and he sent to graze with the beasts. *Dives* blessing himself for many yeares, and within a few houres the pillow is pluck't from under his head, and you hear no more of him till out of hell he roare : yea, a whole world, (few persons excepted) drowned,

Dan. 4. 31, 33.

drowned, and they not know till the day the flood came, *Mat.* 24. 29. and swept them all away: And who art thou, O man, that promisest thy self an exemption, when Kings, Cities, a whole world have been ruined after this sort?

This reproves those, who indeed think oft of this evil day; *Use* 3. (much against their will) by reason of an awakened conscience, that is ever pinching of them, and preaching on *Pauls* text, before *Felix* to them, till it makes them tremble as he did; yet such is the power of lust in their hearts, that it makes them spur on, notwithstanding all the rebukes conscience gives them, and affrighting thoughts they have of the evil day; yet they continue in their old trade of sin desperately. These wretches are the objects of our saddest pity. The secure sinner (that has broke prison from his conscience) is like a strong-brain'd drunkard, he swallows down his sin, as the (other doth his drink) with pleasure, and is not stirr'd at all; but here is a man that is stomach-lick, (as I may so say) his conscience is oft disgorging his sweet draughts, and yet he will sinne, though with pain and anguish. O consider (poor wretches) what you do! instead of arming your selves against the evil day, you arme the evil day against your selves; you are sticking the bed with pins and needles, on which you must ere long be laid; you are throwing billets into that fiery furnace, wherein at last you shall be cast, and all this in spight of your consciences, which yet God mercifully sets in your way, that the prickings of them may be as a hedge of thornes, to keep thee from the pursuit of thy lusts. Know therefore, if thou wilt go on, that as thy conscience takes from the pleasure of thy sin at present, so it will adde to the horror of thy torment hereafter.

It reproves those, who, though they are not so violent and *Use* 4. outrageous in sin, to make them stink above ground in the nostrils of others, yet rest in an unarm'd condition, they do not flie to Christ for covering and shelter against this day of storme and tempest, and the reason is, they have a lie in their right hand, they feed on ashes, and a deceived heart carries them aside from seeking after Christ. It would make one tremble to see how confident many are with their false hopes and self-confidences, daring to come up (as *Corah* with his Censer, as undauntedly as *Moses* himself) even to the mouth of the grave, till on a

sudden they are swallowed up with destruction, and sent to be undeceiv'd in hell, who would not be beaten from their refuges of lies here; whoever thou art, O man, and whatever thou hast to glory in, were it the most Saint-like conversation that ever any lived on earth, yet if this be thy shelter against the evil day, thou wilt perish. No salvation when that flood comes but Christ, yea, being in Christ, hanging on the out-side of the Ark by a specious Profession, will not save; Me thinks I see how those of the old world ran for their lives, some to this hill, and others to that high tree, and how the waves pursued them, till at last they were swept into the devouring flood. Such will your end be, that turn any other way for help, then to Christ; yet the Ark waits on you, yea, comes up close to your gate to take you in. *Noah* did not put forth his hand more willingly to take in the dove, then Christ doth to receive those who flee to him for refuge. O reject not your own mercies for lying vanity.

Use 3.

Let it put thee upon the enquiry (whoever thou art) whether thou beest in a posture of defence for this evil day. Ask thy soul soberly and solemnly, Art thou provided for this day, this evil day? how couldest thou part with what that will take away, and welcome what it will certainly bring? Death comes with a volder to carry away all thy carnal enjoyments & to bring thee up a reckoning for them. O canst thou take thy leave of the one, and with peace and confidence reade the other? will it not affright thee to have thy health and strength turn'd into faintness and feebleness, thy sweet nights of rest into waking eyes, and restless tossings up and down; thy voice that has so often chanted to the viol, to be now acquainted with no other tune but sighs and groans? O how canst thou look upon thy sweet and dear relations with thoughts of removing from them? yea, behold the instrument, as it were, whetting that shall give the fatal stroke to sever soul and body? think that thou wert now half dead in thy members, that are most remote from the fountain of life, and death to have but a few moments journey, before it arive to thy heart, and so beat thy last breath out of thy body. Possibly the inevitable necessity of these do make thee to harden thy self against them; this might indeed in some Heathen, that is not resolv'd whether there be another world or no, help a little to blunt the edge of that terrour, which other-
wise

wife would cut deeper in his amazed heart. But if thou believest another world, and that judgement which stands at death's back, ready to allot thee thy unchangeable state in blisse or misery; surely thou canst not relieve thy awakened conscience with such a poor cordial. O therefore think what answer thou meanest to give unto the great God, at thy appearing before him, when he shall ask thee, what thou canst say, why the sentence of eternal damnation should not then be pronounced against thee? Truly we deale unfaithfully with our owne souls, if we bring not our thoughts to this issue. If now you should ask how you should provide against the evil day, so that you may stand before that dreadful bar, and live so in the mean time, that you might not be under a slavish bondage, through the fearful expectation of it? Take it in a few directions.

First, if ever you would have a blessed issue of this evil day, so as to stand in judgement before the great God, rest not till thou hast got into a Covenant-relation with Christ. Dying *David's* living comfort was drawn from the Covenant God had made with him; this was all his desire, and all his salvation; how canst thou put thy head into the other world without horror, if thou hast not solid ground that Christ will own thee for his? Heaven hath its proper heires, and so hath hell. The heires of heaven are such as are in Covenant with God. The foundation of it was laid in a Covenant, and all the mansions there are prepared for a people in Covenant with him; *Gather my Saints together that have made a Covenant with me.* But how mayest thou get into this Covenant-relation? First, break thy covenant with sin. Thou art by nature a covenant-servant to sin and Satan, may be thou hast not expressly in words, and formally as witches, seal'd this Covenant, yet virtually, as thou hast done the work of Satan, and been at the command of thy lusts, accepting the reward of unrighteousnesse. (the pleasure and carnal advantages they have paid thee in for the same) therein thou hast declared thy self to be so. Now if ever thou wilt be taken into Covenant with God, break this; a Covenant with hell and heaven cannot stand together.

Secondly, betroth thy self to Christ. The Covenant of grace is the joynture which God settles only upon Christ's Spouse.

Re-

1.

2.

Rebeccah had not the Jewels and costly raiment till she was promised to become *Isaacs* wife, *Gen. 24. 53.* All the Promises are *Yea* and *Amen* in *Christ*. If once thou receivest *Christ*, with him thou receivest them. He that owes the tree hath right to all the fruit that is on it. Now that thou mayest not huddle up a marriage between *Christ* and thee, so as to be disown'd of *Christ*, and it prove a nullity at last, it behoves thee to look to it, that there be found in thee what *Christ* expects in every soul that he espouseth. First, therefore consider whether thou canst heartily love the Person of *Christ*. Look wisely on him again and again, as he is set forth in all his spiritual excellencies, are they such as thy heart can close with? doth his holy nature and all those heavenly graces with which he is beautified, render him desirable to thee? or couldst thou like him better if he were not so precise and exactly holy? yea, is thy heart so inflamed with a desire of him, that thou canst love him with a conjugal love. A woman may love one as a friend? whom she cannot love so as to make him her husband. A friendly love may stand with a love of some other equal to it, yea, Superiour; But a conjugal love is such as will bear neither: canst thou finde in thy heart to forsake all other, and cleave to *Christ*? does thy heart speak thee ready, and present thee willing to go with thy sweet *Jesus*, though he carry thee from father, and fathers house? Is thy confidence such of his power to protect thee from all thy enemies, sin, wrath and hell, that thou canst resolutely put the life of thy soul into his hands, to be saved by the sole virtue of his blood, and strength of his omnipotent arme; and of his care to provide for thee for this life and the other, that thou canst acquiesce in what he promiseth to do for thee? In a word, if thou hast *Christ*, thou must not only love him, but for his sake, all thy new Kindred, which by thy marriage to him thou shalt be allied unto. How canst thou fadge to call the Saints thy brethren? canst thou love them heartily, and forget all the old grudges thou hast had against them? Some of them thou wilt find poor and persecuted, yet *Christ* is not ashamed to call them brethren, neither must thou. If thou findest thy heart now in such a disposition as suits these Interrogatories, I dare not deny the banes, yea, I dare not but pronounce *Christ* and thee Husband and Wife. Go, poor soul (if I may call so glorious

glorious a Bride, poor,) Go and comfort thy self with the expectation of the Bridegrooms coming for thee, and when the evil day approaches, and death it self draws nigh, look not now with terrour upon it, but rather revive with old *Jacob*, to see the chariot which shall carry thee over unto the embraces of thy husband, whom thou hearest to be in so great Honour and Majesty in Heaven, as may assure thee he is able to make thee welcome when thou comest there. Amongst the *all things* which are ours by being Christs, the Apostle forgets not to name this to be one, *Death is ours*. And well he did so, or else we should never have look't upon it as a gift, but rather as a judgment. Now soul, thou art out of any danger of hurt, that the evil day can do thee. Yet there remains something for thee to do, that thou mayest walk in the comfortable expectation of the evil day. We see that gracious persons may, for want of a holy care fall into such distempers, as may put a sting into their thoughts of the evil day, *David*, that at one time would not feare to walk in the valley of the shadow of death, is so affrighted at another time when he is led towards it, that he cries, *Spare me, O Lord, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence*, Psal. 39. The childe, though he loves his father, may do that which may make him afraid to go home. Now, Christian, if thou wouldest live in a comfortable expectation of the evil day,

First, labour to die in this life, and the enjoyments of it every day more and more. Death is not so strong to him, whose natural strength has been wasted by long pining sickness, as it is to him that lies but a few dayes, and has strength of nature to make great resistance. Truly thus it is here, that Christian, whose love to this life and the contents of it, hath been for many years consuming and dying, will with more facility part with them, then he whose love is stronger to them. All Christians are not mortified in the same degree to the world. *Paul* tells us he died daily. He was ever sending more and more of his heart out of the world, so that by that time he came to die, all his affections were pack't up and gone, which made him the more ready to follow, *συνθύνω*, *I am ready to be offered up*, 2 Tim. 4.6. If it be but a tooth to pull out, the faster it stands, the more pain we have to draw it. O loosen the roots

of thy affections from the world, and the tree will fall more easily.

2. Secondly, be careful to approve thy self with diligence and faithfulness to God in thy place and calling. The clearer thou standest in thy own thoughts concerning the uprightness of thy heart in the tenure of thy Christian course, the more compo-
sure thou wilt have when the evil day comes. I beseech thee, O Lord (saith good Hezekiah at the point of death as he thought) remember now how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. This cannot be our confidence, but it will be a better companion then a scoulding conscience; if the blood be bad, the spirits will be tainted also; the more our life has been corrupted with hypocrisie and unfaithfulness, the weaker our faith will be in a dying houre. There is great difference between two children that come home at night, one from the field, where he hath been diligent and faithful about his fathers work, and another that hath played the Truant a great part of the day; the former comes in confidently to stand before his father; the other sneaks to bed, & is afraid his father should see him, or ask where he hath been. O Sirs, look to your walking. These have been trying as times as ever came to *England*. It has required more care & courage to keep sincerity then formerly. And that is the reason why it is so rare to finde Christians, (especially those whose place and calling hath been more in the winde of temptation) go off the stage at death, with such a *Plaudite* of inward peace in their be-
somes.

3. Thirdly, familiarize the thoughts of the evil day to thy soul, Handle this serpent often, walk daily in the serious meditations of it, do not run from them because they are displeasing to flesh, that is the way to encrease the terrour of it. Do with your souls, when thy of, and scared with the thoughts of affliction or death, as you use to do with your beast, that is given to bogle and start as you ride on him. When he flies back and starts at a thing, you do not yield to his fear and go back, that will make him worse another time, but you ride him up close to that which he is afraid of, and in time you break him of that quality. The evil day is not such a fearful thing to thee that art a Christian, as thou shouldest start for it. Bring up thy heart close to it. Shew thy

thy soul, what Christ hath done to take the sting out of it, what the sweet promises are, that are given on purpose to overcome the feare of it, and what thy hopes are thou shalt get by it. These will satisfie and compose thy Spirit, whereas the shunning the thoughts of it, will but increase thy feare, and bring thee more into bondage to it.



CHAP. III.

The second Argument with which the Exhortation is pressed, drawn from the assured victory which shall crown the souls conflict, if in this Armour: where several Points couched in the Argument, are briefly handled

WE come now to the second Argument the Apostle useth, further to presse the exhortation; and that is taken, from the glorious victory, which hovers over the heads of believers while in the fight, and shall surely crown them in the end; this is held forth in these words, *And having done all, to stand.* The phrase is short but full.

SECT. I.

First observe, Heaven is not won with good words and a fair Profession; *Having done all.* The doing Christian is the man that shall stand, when the empty boaster of his faith shall fall. The great talkers of Religion are oft the least doers. His Religion is in vain, whose Profession brings not letters testimonial from a holy life. Sacrifice without obedience is Sacriledge.

Such rob God of that which he makes most account of. A great Captain once smote one of his souldiers for railing at his enemy, saying, that he called him not to rail on him, but to fight against him and kill him. 'Tis not crying out upon the devil, and declaiming against sin in prayer or discourse, but fighting and mortifying it that God looks chiefly upon; such a one else doth but heat the aire; there are no marks to be seen on his flesh and unmortified lusts that he hath fought. *Paul* was in earnest, he left a witnesse upon his body, made black and blew with stroaks of mortification. It was not a little vapouring in fight of the Philistines that got *David* his wife, but shedding their blood: And is it so small a matter to be son to the King of Heaven, that thou thinkest to obtain it, without giving a real proof of thy zeal for God, and hatred to sin? *Not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work; this man* (saith the Apostle) *shall be blessed in his deed*, James 1.25. Mark, not by his deed, but in his deed, he shall meet blessedness in that way of obedience he walks in. The empty Professour disappoints others, who seeing his leaves, expect fruit, but finde none, and at last he disappoints himselfe; he thinks to reach heaven, but shall misse of it. *Tertullian* speaks of some that think, *Satis Deum habere, si corde & animo suspiciatur, licet actu minus fiat*: God hath enough (they think) if he be feared and revered in their hearts, though in their actions they shew it not so much: and therefore they can sin, and believe in God, and fear him never the worse: This (saith he) is to play the Adulteresse, and yet be chaste, to prepare poison for ones father, and yet be dutiful; but let such know, (saith the same father) that if they can sin and believe God will pardon them with a contradiction also, he'll forgive them, but they shall be turn'd into hell for all that. As ever you would stand at last, look you be found doing the work your Lord hath left you to make up, and trust not to lying words, as the Prophet speaks, *Jer. 7.*

SECT. II.

Secondly, observe, that such is the mercy of God in Christ, to his children, that he accepts their weak endeavours, (joyn'd with sincerity and perseverance in his service) as if they were full obedience, and therefore they are here said to have *done all*. O who would not serve such a Lord! you hear servants sometimes complain of their Masters to be so rigid and strict, that they can never please them, no, not when they do their utmost: But this cannot be charged upon God. Be but so faithful as to do thy best, and God is so gracious that he will pardon thy worst. *David* knew this Gospel-indulgence when he said, *Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy Commandments*, Pf. 119.6. *בְּכָל צִוְיֶיךָ יְיָ*, when my eye is to all thy Commandments. The Traveller hath his eye on or towards the place he is going, though he be yet short of it, there he would be, and is putting on all he can to reach it; So stands the Saints heart to all the Commands of God; he presseth on to come nearer and nearer to full obedience: such a soul shall never be put to shame. But wo to those that cover their sloth with the name of infirmity, yea, that spend their zeal and strength in the pursuit of the world or their lusts, and then think to make all up when charg'd therewith, That it is their infirmity, and they can serve God no better. These do by God as those two did by their Prince (*Francis* the first of *France*) who cut off their right hand one for another, and then made it an excuse they were lame, and so could not serve in his Gallies, for which they were sent to the Gallies. Thus many will be found at last to have disabled themselves, by refusing that help the Spirit hath offered to them, yea, wasted what they had given them, and so shall be rewarded for hypocrites as they are. God knows how to distinguish between the sincerity of a Saint in the midst of his infirmities, and the shifts of a false heart. But we will wave these, and briefly speak to four points which lie clear in the words.

First, here is the necessity of perseverance. *Having done all*.

2ly, here is the necessity of divine armour, to persevere till we have done all, Wherefore else bids he them take this armor for this

Doct. 2.

I.
2.

end, if they could do it without?

3. Thirdly, here is the certainty of persevering and overcoming at last, if clad with this Armour, else it were small encouragement to bid them take that Armour which would not surely defend them.

4. Fourthly, here is the blessed result of the Saints perseverance, propounded as that which will abundantly recompence all their pain and patience in the war, having done all to stand. From these follow foure distinct Points.

1. First, he that will be Christs souldier must persevere.

2. Secondly, there can be no perseverance without true grace in the heart.

3. Thirdly, where true grace is, that soul shall persevere.

4. Fourthly, to stand at the end of this war, will abundantly recompence all our hazard and hardship endured in the warre.

SECT. III.

Def. 1.

He that will be Christs souldier must persevere to the end of his life in this war against Satan. This, *having done all*, comes in after our conflict with death. *That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day*; then follows, *And having done all*. We have not done all till that pitch't battel be fought. *The last enemy is death*. The word *καταπαύειν*, imports as much as to finish a businesse, and bring a matter to a full issue, so *Phil. 2. 12.* where we translate it well, *Work out your salvation*: that is, perfect it; be not Christians by halves, but go through with it, the through Christian is the true Christian. Not he that takes the field, but he that keeps the field; not he that sets out, but he that holds out in this holy war, deserves the name of a Saint. There is not such a thing in this sense belonging to Christianity as an honourable retreat; not such a word of command in all Christs military Discipline, as fall back and lay down your armes; No, you must fall on, and stand to your armes, till call'd off by death.

1. First, we are under a Covenant and Oath to do this. Formerly

merly souldiers used to take an oath not to flinch from their colours, but faithfully to cleave up to their Leaders, this they called *Sacramentum militare*, a military oath. Such an oath lies upon every Christian. It is so essential to the being of a Saint, that they are described by this, *Psal. 50. 5. Gather my Saints together, those that have made a Covenant with me.* We are not Christians, till we have subscribed this Covenant, and that without any reservation. When we take upon us the Profession of Christs Name, we list our selves in his muster-roll, and by it do promise, that we will live and die with him in opposition to all his enemies. *Every Nation will walk in the name of his God, and we will walk in the Name of our God;* and what is it to walk in the Name of our God, but to fight under the banner of his Gospel, wherein his Name is displayed, by giving an eternal defiance to sin and Satan? If a Captain had not such a tie on his souldiers, he might have them to seek when the day of battle comes: therefore Christ tells us upon what termes he will enroll us among his disciples. *If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Crosse, and follow me.* He will not entertain us, till we resigne up our selves freely to his dispose, that there may be no disputing with his commands afterwards, but as one under his authority, go and come at his word.

Secondly, perseverance is necessary, because our enemy perseveres to oppose us. There is no truce in the devils heart, no cessation of armes in our enemies camp. If an enemy continue to assault a City, and they within cease to resist, it is easie to tell what will follow. The Prophet that was sent to *Bethel* did his errand well, withstood *Jeroboams* temptation, but in his way home was drawn aside by the old Prophet, and at last slain by a Lion. Thus many flie from one temptation, but not persevering, are vanquish't by another, those that at one time escape his sword, at another time are slain by it. *Joash* was hopeful, when young, but it lasted not long. Yea, many precious servants of God, not making such vigorous resistance in their last dayes as in their first, have fallen foully, as we see in *Solomon, Asa,* and others. Indeed it is hard when a line is drawn to a great length, to keep it so streight that it slacken not, and to hold a thing long in our hand, and not to have a numbnesse grow in our

our fingers so as to remit of our strength; therefore we are bid so often to hold fast the Profession of our faith; but when we see an enemy gaping to catch us when we fall, me thinks this should quicken us the more to it.

Thirdly, because the promise of life and glory is settled upon the persevering soul, the crown stands at the Goal, he hath it that comes to the end of the race. *To him that overcomes will I give, not in pralio, but in bello, not in a particular skirmish, but in the whole war. Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the whole Will of God, ye might receive the Promise, Heb. 10. 36.* There is a remarkable accent on that, *henceforth*, which Paul mentions, *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight, henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness.* Why, was it not laid up before? yes, but having persevered and come near the Goale, being within sight of home, ready to die, he takes now surer hold of the promise. Indeed in this sense it is, that a gracious soul is nearer its salvation after every victory then it was before, because he approacheth nearer to the end of his race, which is the time promised for the receiving of the promised salvation. Then and not till then the Garland drops upon his head.

Rom. 13 10.

Use.

Here we may take up a sad lamentation, in respect of the many Apostate Professours of our dayes. Never was this spiritual falling sicknesse more rife. O how many are sick of it at present, and not a few fallen asleep by it? These times of warre and confusion have not made so many broken Merchants as broken Professours; where is the Congregation that cannot shew some who have out-lived their Profession? not unlike the silkworm, which (they say) after all her spinning, works her self out of her bottome, and becomes at last a common flie. Are there not many, whose forwardnesse in Religion we have stood gazing on with admiration, as the disciples on the Temple, ready to say one to another, as they to Christ, See what manner of stones these are? what polished gifts and shining graces are here? and now not one stone left upon another. O did you ever think, that they who went in so goodly aray towards heaven in communion with you, would after that, face about, and run over to the devils side, turn Blasphemers, Worldlings and Atheists, as some have done? O what a sad change is here! *It had been better*

better for them, not to have known the way of righteousness, then after they have known it, to turne from the holy Commandment delivered unto them, 2Pet. 2.21. Better never to have walk't a step towards heaven, then to put such a scorn and reproach upon the wayes of God. *Comparationem videtur egisse qui utrumque cognoverit, & judicatio pronuntiasset eum meliorem, cujus se reversus esse maluerit.* Tertull. de poenit. Such a one who hath known both what a service Satans is, and what Gods is, then to revolt from God to the devil, seems to have compared one with the other, and as the result of his mature thoughts, to pronounce the devils which he chooseth, better then Gods which he leaveth. And how is it possible that any can sin upon a higher guilt, and go to hell under a greater load of wrath? These are they which God loaths. He that hates putting away, disdains much more to be himself thus put away. *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Heb. 10.38. The Apostate is said to tread upon the Son of God, Heb. 10.29. as if he were no better then the dirt under his feet. Well, he shall have treading for treading, God himself will set his foot upon him, *Psal. 119.118. Thou hast trodden down all that erre from thy statutes,* and who (think you) will be weary soonest? he that is under foot beares the weight of the whole man upon him. To be under the foot of God, is to lie under the whole weight of Gods wrath. O pity and pray for such forlorn souls, they are objects of the one, and subjects of the other, though they are fallen low, yet not into hell, now and then we see an *Entychus* raised, that hath fallen from such a height, *And you that stand, take heed lest you fall.*

SECT. IV.

Secondly. a soul void of divine armour cannot persevere. What this divine armour is I have shewen, and the Apostle here doth in the severall pieces of it. The sanctifying graces of Gods spirit are this Armour. One that hath not these wrought in him, will never hold out to passe all the stages of this Christian race, to fight all the battels that are to be fought before victory is to be had. Common gifts of the Spirit, such as illumination,

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conviction, sudden pangs, and flushing heats of affection may carry out the creature for a while with a goodly appearance of zeal for God, and forwardnesse in Profession, but the strength these afford is soon spent. *Johns* hearers mentioned, *John* 5. 35. got some light and heat by sitting under his burning Ministry, but how long did it last? *Ye were willing to rejoyce for a season.* They were very beautiful colours that were drawn on them, but not laid in oyle, and therefore soon wash't off again. The foolish Virgins made as great a blaze with their lamps, and did expect as good a day when Christ should come, as the wise Virgins, but (alas!) their lamps are out before he appeared, and as good never a whit, as never the better. The stony ground more forward than the best soile, the seed comes up immediately, as if a crop should soon have been reap't, but a few nipping frosts turnes its hue, and the day of harvest proves a day of desperate sorrow. All these instances, and many more in Scripture do evince, that nothing short of solid grace, and a principle of divine life in the soul will persevere. How forward soever Formalists and slighty Professours are, to promise themselves hopes of reaching heaven, they will finde it too long a step for their short-breathed souls to attain. The reasons are,

First, such want a principle of divine life to draw strength from Christ to persevere them in their course. That by which the gracious soule it self perseveres, is the continual supply it receives from Christ; as the arme and foot is kept alive in the body by those vital spirits which they receive from the heart; *I live, (saith Paul) yet not I, but Christ in me;* that is, I live but at Christs cost; he holds, as my soul, so my grace in life: Now the carnal person wanting this union, must needs waste and consume in time. He hath no root to stand on. A carcase when once it begins to rot, never recovers, but every day grows worse till it runs all into putrefaction, no salve or plaister will do it good: but where there is a principle of life, there, when a member is wounded, nature sends supplies of spirits, and helps to work with the salve for a cure. There is the same difference between a gracious person and an ungracious; see them opposed in this respect, *Prov.* 14. 17. *The righteous man falls seven times a day, and riseth; but the wicked falleth into mischief:* that is, in falling he falls further, and hath no power to recover himself. When

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Cain sinned, see how he falls further and further like a stone down a hill, never staves till he comes to the bottome of despair; from envying his brother, to malice, from malice to murder, from murder to impudent lying, and brazen-fac't boldnesse to God himself, and from that to despair; so true is that, *2Tim. 3.13. Evil men shall wax worse and worse.* But now when a Saint falls; he riseth, because when he falls he hath a principle of life to cry out to Christ, and such an interest in Christ as stirs him up to help; *Lord, save me,* said *Peter*, (when he began to sink) and presently Christs hand is put forth, he chides him for his unbelief, but he helps him.

Secondly, an unregenerate soul hath no assurance for the continuance of those common gifts of the Spirit he hath at present; they come on the same termes that temporal enjoyments do to such a one. A carnal person, when he hath his table most sumptuously spread, cannot shew any word of promise under Gods hand that he shall be provided for the next meal. God gives these things to the wicked, as we a crust or a nights lodging to a beggar in our barne; 'tis our bounty, such a one could not sue us for denying the same: so in the common gifts of the Spirit, God was not bound to give them, nor is he to continue them. Thou hast some knowledge of the things of God, thou mayest for all this die without knowledge at last, thou art a sinner in chaines, restraining grace keepes thee in; this may be taken off, and thou let loose to thy lusts as freely as ever. And how can he persevere, that in one day may from praying fall to cursing, from a whining complaining conscience, come to have a feared conscience?

Thirdly, every unregenerate man, when most busie with Profession, hath those engagements lie upon him, that will necessarily, when put to it, take him off one time or other. One is engaged to the world, and when he can come to a good market for that, then he goes away, he cannot have both, and now he'll make it appear which he loved best. *Demas* hath forsaken us, and embraced this present world. Another is a slave to his lust, and when this calls him he must go in spite of Profession, conscience, God and all. *Herod* feared *John*, and did many things, but love is stronger then feare; his love to *Herodias* overcomes his fear of *John*, and makes him cut off at once the head of

John, and the hopeful buddings which appeared in the tenderneſſe of his conſcience, and begun Reformation. One root of bitterneſſe or other will ſpring up in ſuch a one. If the complexion of the ſoul be profane, it will at laſt come to it, however for a while there may ſome religious colour appear in the mans face, from ſome other external cauſe.

Uſe.

This ſhews us what is the root of all final Apoſtaſie; and that is the want of a through change of the heart. The Apoſtate doth not loſe the grace he had, but diſcovers he never had any; and 'tis no wonder to hear that he proves bankrupt, that was worſe then nought when he firſt ſet up. Many take up their Saintſhip upon truit, and trade in the duties of Religion with the credit they have gain'd from others opinion of them. They believe themſelves to be Chriſtians, becauſe others hope them to be ſuch, and ſo their great buſineſſe is by a zeal in thoſe exerciſes of Religion that lie out-moſt, to keep up the credit which they have abroad, but do not look to get a ſtock of ſolid grace within, which ſhould maintain them in their Profeſſion, and this proves their undoing at laſt. Let it therefore make us in the feare of God, to conſider upon what ſcore we take up our Profeſſion. Is there that within which bears proportion to our outward zeal? Have we laid a good bottome? Is not the ſuperſtructive top-heavy, jetting too far beyend the weak foundation? They ſay trees ſhoot as much in the root under ground as in the branches above, and ſo doth true grace. O remember what was the perishing of the ſeed in the ſtony ground; it lacked root and why ſo but becauſe it was ſtony. Be willing the plough ſhould go deep enough to humble thee for ſin, and rend thy heart from ſinne. The ſoul effectually brought out of the love of ſin as ſin, will never be through friends with it again. In a word, be ſerious to finde out the great ſpring that ſets all thy wheels on motion in thy religious trade. Do as men that would know how much they are worth, who ſet what they owe on one ſide, and what ſtock they have on the other; and then when they have laid out enough to diſcharge all debts and engagements, what remains to themſelves, they may call their own: Thus do thou conſider what thou ſtandeſt engaged to, thy worldly credit, profit, ſlavish feare of God, and ſiſh deſire of happineſſe, and when thou haſt allowed for all theſe, ſee then

then what remains of thy feare of God, love to God, &c. If nothing, thou art nought; if any, the lesse there be, the weaker Christian thou art, and when thou comest to be tried in Gods fire, thou wilt suffer losse of all the other, which, as hay and stubble will be burnt up.

SECT. V.

Every soul clad with this Armour of God shall stand and persevere: Or thus, True grace can never be vanquish't. The Christian is borne a Conquerour, the gates of hell shall not prevail against him. *He that is borne of God, overcome the world,* 1 John 5.4. Mark from whence the victory is dated, even from his birth. There is victory sown in his new nature, even that seed of God, which will keep him from being swallowed up by sin or Satan. As Christ rose never to die more, so doth he raise soules from the grave of sin, never to come under the power of spiritual death more. *These holy ones of God cannot see corruption.* Hence he that believes is said in the present Tense to have eternal life. As the Law that came foure hundred yeares after, could not make void the Promise made to *Abraham*, so nothing that intervenes, can hinder the accomplishing of that promise of eternal life, which was given, and passed to Christ in their behalf before the foundation of the world. If a Saint could any way miscarry, and fall short of this eternal life, it must be from one of these three causes. 1. Because God may forsake the Christian, and withdraw his grace and help from him; Or 2. Because the believer may forsake God; Or lastly, because Satan may pluck him out of the hands of God. A fourth I know not. Now none of these can be.

First, God can never forsake the Christian. Some undivided speeches have drop't from tempted soules, discovering some leares of Gods casting them off, but they have been confuted, and have eaten their words with shame, as we see in *Job* and *David*. O what admirable security hath the great God given his children in this particular!

First, in Promises. *He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* 12. 13. 14.

sake thee. Five negatives in that promise as so many seals to ratifie it to our faith, he assures us there never did or can so much as arise a repenting thought in his heart concerning the purposes of his love and special grace towards his children, *Rom. 11. 29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,* even the believers sin against him, their froward carriage stirs not up thoughts of casting them off, but of reducing them; *For the iniquity of his covetousnesse I was wrath and smote him; I hid me, and was wrath, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart; I have seen his wayes, and will heal them,* *Isa. 51. 27, 28.* The water of the Saints failings, cast on the fire of Gods love cannot quench it; Whom he loves, he loves to the end.

Secondly, God, to give further weight and credit to our unbelieving and mis-giving hearts, seals his promise with an oath. See, *Isa. 54. 9, 10. With everlasting kindnesse will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer; this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should not return over the earth; so have I sworn that I will not be wrath with thee.* Yea, he goes on and tells them, *The mountaines shall depart,* (meaning at the end of the world, when the whole frame of the heavens and earth shall be dissolv'd) *but his kindnesse shall not depart, neither shall his Covenant of peace be removed.* Now left any should think this was some charter belonging to the Jewes alone, we finde it. *v. 17. settled on every servant of God as his portion. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousnesse is of me, saith the Lord.* And surely God that is so careful to make his childrens inheritance sure to them, will con them little thanks, who busie their wits to invalid and weaken his conveyances, yea, disprove his will; if they had taken a bribe, they could not plead Satans cause better.

Thirdly, in the actual fulfilling these promises, (which he hath made to believers,) to Christ their Attorney. As God, before the world began, gave a promise of eternal life to Christ for them, so now hath he given actual possession of that glorious place to Christ (as their Advocate and Attorney) where that eternal life shall be enjoyed by them; for as he came upon our errand from heaven, so thither he returned again to take and hold possession of that inheritance, which God had of old promised, and he in one summe at his death had paid for. And now, what ground

ground of feare can there be in the believers heart, concerning Gods love standing firme to him; when he sees the whole Covenant performed already to Christ for him, whom God hath not only called to, sanctified for, and upheld in the great work he was to finish for us; but also justified in his Resurrection and Jayle-delivery, and received him into heaven, there to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on high, by which he hath not only possession for us, but full power to give it unto all believers?

A second occasion of fear to the believer, that he shall not persevere, may be taken from himself. He has many sad fears and tremblings of heart, that he shall at last forsake God: The journey is long to heaven, and his grace weak: O, saith he, is it not possible that this little grace should faile, and I fall short at last of glory? Now here there is such provision made in the Covenant, as scatters this cloud also.

First, the Spirit of God is given on purpose to prevent this; Christ left his mother with *John*, but his Saints with his Spirit, to tutour and keep them, that they should not lose themselves in their journey to heaven. O how sweet is that place, *Ezek. 36. 27.* *I will put my Spirit in you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements and do them.* He doth not say they shall have his Spirit, if they will walk in his statutes: no, his Spirit shall cause them to do it. But may be thou art afraid thou mayest grieve him, and so he in anger leave thee, and thou perish for want of his help and counsel. *Ans.* The Spirit of God is indeed sensible of unkindnesse, and upon a Saints sinne, may withdraw in regard of present assistance, but never in regard of his care; asa mother may let her froward childe go alone, till it get a knock, that may make it cry to be taken up again into her armes, but still her eye is on it that it shall not fall into mischief. The Spirit withdrew from *Samsen*, and he fell into the Philistines hands, and this makes him cry to God, and the Spirit puts forth his strength in him again. Thus here, Indeed the office of the Spirit is to abide for ever with the Saints, *John 14. 16.* *He shall send you another Comforter, that he may abide for ever with you.*

Secondly, it is one main businesse of Christs intercession, to obtain of God perseverance for our weak graces. *I have prayed, (saith Christ to Peter) that thy faith faile not.* But was not that a par-

particular Priviledge granted to him, which may be denied to another? O Sirs, do we think that Christs love looks a squint? doth he pray for one childe more then another? such feares and jealousies foolish children are ready to take up, and therefore Christ prevents them, by bidding *Peter*, in the very next words, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*, Luke 22. 31. that is, when thou feelest the efficacy and force of my prayer for thy faith, carry this good newes to them, that their hearts may be strengthened also, and what strengthening had it been to them, if Christ prayed not for them as well as *Peter*? does Christ pray for us? yea, doth he not live to pray for us? O how can children of so many prayers, of such prayers perish? The Saints prayers have a mighty power. *Jacob* wrestled and had power with God, this was his sword and bowe (to allude to what he said of the parcel of ground he took from the Amorite) by which he got the victory, and had power with God. This was the Key with which *Elijah* opened and shut heaven. And if the weak prayers of Saints (coming in his Name) have such credit in heaven, that with them they can go to Gods treasure, and carry away as much as their armes of faith can hold. O then, what prevalency has Christs intercession who is a Son, an obedient Son, that is come from finishing his great work on earth, and now prayes his Father for nothing, but what he hath bid him ask, yea, for nothing but what he is before-hand with him for, and all this to a Father that loves those he prays for as well as himself? Bid Satan avaunt; say not thy weak faith shall perish, till thou hearest that Christ hath left praying, or receiveth with a repulse.

Hardly, let us see whether Satan be able to pluck the Christian away, and slep betwixt him and home. I have had occasion to speak of this subject in another place, the lesse here shall move. Abundant provision is made against his assaults. The Christian is wrap't up in the everlasting armes of Almighty power, and what can a cursed devil do against God, who laid those chains on him which he cannot shake off? when he is able to prick that dart of divine fury out of his own conscience which God hath fastened there, then let him think of such an enterprize as this. How can he overcome thee, that cannot tempt thee but in Gods appointed time; And if God set Satan his time to assault

assault the Christian whom he loves so dearly, surely it shall be when he shall be repulsed with greatest shame.

Away then with that doctrine, which saith, one may be a Saint to day, and none to morrow; now a *Peter*, anon a *Judas*: O what unsavoury stuffe is this! a principle it is that at once crosseth the main design of God in the Gospel-Covenant, reflects sadly on the honour of Christ, and wounds the Saints comfort to the heart.

First, it is derogatory to Gods design in the Gospel-Covenant, which we finde plainly to be this, that his children might be put into a state sure and safe from miscarrying at last, which by the first Covenant, man was not. See, *Rom. 4. 16.* *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.* God on purpose, because of the weaknesse of the first Covenant, through the mutable nature of man, makes a new Covenant of a far different constitution and frame, not of works, as that was, but of faith, and why? the Apostle tells us, that it might be sure to all the seed, that not one soule, who by faith should be adopted into *Abrahams* family, and so become a childe of the promise, should faile of inheriting the blessing of the promise, which is eternal life; called so, *Titus 1. 2.* and all this because the promise is founded upon grace, that is, Gods immutable good pleasure in Christ, and not upon the variable and inconstant obedience of man as the first Covenant was. But if a Saint may finally fall, then is the promise no more sure in this Covenant, then it was in that, and so God should not have his end he propounds.

Secondly, it reflects sadly on Christs honour, both as he is intrusted with the Saints salvation, and also as he is interested in it. First, as he is intrusted with the Saints salvation. He tells us they are given him of his Father for this very end, that he should give them eternal life; yea, that power which he hath over all flesh; was given him to render him every way able to effect this one businessse, *John 17. 2.* He accepts the charge, ownes them as his sheep, knowes them every one, and promisseth, *he will give them eternal life, they shall never perishe, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand.* *John 10. 27, 28.* Now, how well do they consult with Christs honour, that say, his sheep may die in a ditch of final apostasie notwithstanding all this?

Secondly, as he is interested in the salvation of every Saint. The life of his own glory is bound up in the eternal life of his Saints. Its true, when *Adam* fell God did save his stake, but how can Christ, who is so nearly united to every believing soul? There was a league of friendship betwixt God and *Adam*, but no such union as here, where Christ and his Saints make but one Christ, for which his Church is called Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 12. *As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so is Christ.* Christ and his members make one Christ: now is it possible a piece of Christ can be found at last burning in hell? can Christ be a cripple Christ? can this member drop off and that? 'Tis as possible that all, as any should; and how can Christ part with his mystical members and not with his glory? doth not every member adde an ornament to the body yea, an honour? The Church is called *the fulnesse of him*, Eph. 1. 23. O how dishonourable is it to Christ, that we should think he shall want any of his fulnesse? and how can the man be full and compleat that wants a member?

3.

2 Cor. 2. 17.

Thirdly, it wounds the Saints comfort to the heart, and layes their joy a bleeding. *Paul* saith, he did not *καταλείπειν τὴν ἀπόβυσσον* *τῆς χάριτος*. He did not dash the generous wine of Gods Word with the water of mans conceits. No, he gave them pure Gospel. Truly, this principle of Saints falling from grace gives a sad dash to the sweet wine of the Promises; the soul-reviving comfort that sparkles in them ariseth from the sure conveyance with which they are in Christ made over to believers, to have and to hold for ever. Hence called *the sure mercies of David*. Acts 13. 34. *mercies that shall never faile*: This, this indeed is wine that makes glad the heart of a Saint; though he may be whipt in the house when he sins, yet he shall not be turned out of doores. As God promised in the type to *David*s feed, *Psal.* 89. 33. *Nevertheless, my loving kindnesse will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to faile; and, v. 36. His seed shall endure for ever.* Could any thing separate the believer from the love of God in Christ, this would be as a hole at the bottome of his cup to leak out all his joy, he might then seare every temptation or affliction he meets would slay him, and so the wickeds curse would be the Saints portion. His life

life would ever hang in doubt before him, and the fearful expectation of his final miscarriage, which he sees may befall him, would eat up the joy of his present hope. Now, how contrary such a frame of heart is to the spirit of adoption, and full assurance of hope, which the grace of the New Covenant gives he that runs may reade in the Word.

This truth prepares a soveraign cordial to restore the fainting spirits of weak believers, who are surprized with many feares, concerning their persevering and holding out to the end of their warfare; Be of good cheer, poor soul; God hath given Christ the life of every soul within the Ark of his Covenant Your eternal safety is provided for; *Whom he loves, he loves to the end*, John 13. 1. Hath he made thee willing in the day of his power to march under his banner, and espouse his quarrel against sinne and hell? the same power that overcame thy rebellious heart to himself, will overcome all thy enemies within and without for thee: say not thou art a bruised reed; with this he will break Satans head, and not cease till he hath brought forth judgement into compleat victory in thy soul. He that can make a few wounded men rise up and take a strong City, can make a wounded spirit triumph over sin and devils. The Ark stood in the midst of *Jordan*, till the whole Camp of *Israel* was safely got over into *Canaan*, *Josh. 3.* And so doth the Coveuant, (which the Ark did but typifie,) yea, Christ, Covenant and all stand to secure the Saints a safe passage to Heaven. If but one believer drownes, the Covenant must drown with him, Christ and the Saint are put together as co-heires of the same inheritance, *Rom. 8. 17.* *If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt heirs with Christ.* We cannot dispute against one, but we question the firmness of the others Title. When you hear Christ is turn'd out of heaven, or himself to be willing to sell his inheritance there; then, poore Christian, feare thy coming thither and not till then. Co-heires cannot sell the inheritance except both give up their right, which Christ will never do nor suffer thee.

Thirdly, this truth calls for a word or two of caution. Though there is no feare of a Saints falling from grace, yet there is great danger of others falling from the top of this comfortable doctrine into a carelesse security, and presumptuous boldnesse; and therefore a battlement is very necessary, that from it we may

Use 2.

Jer. 37. 10.

Use 3.

with safety to our soules, stand and view the pleasant prospect this truth presents to our eye. That flower from which the Bee sucks honey, the spider draws poison. That which is a restorative to the Saints grace, proves an incentive to the lust of a wicked man. What *Paul* said of the Law, we may truly of the Gospel. Sin taking occasion from the grace of the Gospel, and the sweet promises thereof, deceives the carnal heart, and works in him all manner of wickednesse. Indeed sin seldom grows so rank any where, as in those who water its roots with the grace of the Gospel. Two wayes this doctrine may be abused.

First, into a neglect of duty.

Secondly, into a liberty to sin. Take heed of both.

1. First, beware of falling into a neglect of duty upon this score; if a Christian, thou canst not fall away from grace. Take for an antidote against this three particulars.

First, there are other arguments to invite, yea, that will constrain thee to a constant vigorous performing of duty, though the feare of falling away should not come in, or else thou art not a Christian; what? nothing make the childe diligent about his fathers businesse, but feare of being disinherited and turned out of doors? There is sure some better motive to duty in a Saints heart, or else Religion is a melancholy work. Speak for your selves, O ye Saints! Is self-preservation all you pray for, and heare for? Should a messenger come from Heaven, and tell you Heaven were yours, would this make you give over your spiritual trade, and not care whether you had any more acquaintance with God till you came thither? O how harsh doth this sound in your eares? There are such principles engraven in the Christians bosome, that will not suffer a strangenesse long to grow betwixt God and him. He is under the Law of a new life, which carries him naturally to desire communion with God, as the childe doth to see the face of his deare father, and every duty is a Mount wherein God presents himself to be seen and enjoyed by the Christian.

2. Secondly, to neglect duty upon such a perswasion, is contrary to Christs practice and counsel. First, his practice. Though Christ never doubted of his Fathers love, nor questioned the happy issue of all his temptations, agonies and sufferings; yet he

he prays, and prays again more earnestly, *Luke 22. 24.* Secondly, his counsel and command. He told *Peter*, that Satan had begg'd leave to have them to sift them; But withal he comforts him (who was to be hardest put to it) with this. *But I have prayed for thee that thy faith faile not.* Sure our Saviour by this provision made for him and the rest, means to save them a labour that they need not watch or pray. No such matter: after this, as you may see, *v. 40.* He calls them up to duty. *Pray that ye enter not into temptation.* Christs praying for them was to strengthen their faith, when they should themselves pray for the same mercy, not to nourish their sloth that they needed not to pray. Christs prayers in Heaven for his Saints are all heard already; but the returne of them is reserved to be enclosed in the answer God sends to their own prayers. The Christian cannot in faith expect to receive the mercies Christ prays for in Heaven, so long as he lives in the neglect of his duty on earth. They stand ready against he shall call for them by the prayer of faith, and if they be not worth sending this messenger to Heaven, truly they are worth little.

Thirdly, consider, that although the Christian be secured from a total and final Apostasie, yet he may fall sadly to the bruising of his conscience, enfeebling his grace, and reproach of the Gospel, which sure are enough to keep the Christian upon his watch; and the more, because ordinarily the Saints back-slidings, begin in their duties. As it is with Tradefmen in the world, they first grow carelesse of their businesse, often out of their shop, and then they go behinde-hand in their estates: So here, first remisse in a duty, and then fall into a decay of their graces and comforts, yea, sometimes into wayes that are scandalous. A stuffe loseth its glosse before it weares: The Christian, the lustre of his grace in the lively exercise of duty, and then the strength of it.

Secondly, take heed of abusing this doctrine unto a liberty to sin; shall we sin because grace abounds? grow loose, because we have God fast bound in his promise? God forbid, none but a Devil would teach us this Logick. It was a great height of sin those wretched Jewes came to, who could quaffe and carowse it while death look't in upon them at the windows; *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die.* They discovered their Atheisme

therein. But what a prodigious stature in sin must that man be grown to, that can sin under the protection of the promise, and draw his encouragement to sin from the everlasting love of God? Let us eat and drink, for we are sure to live and be saved. Grace cannot dwell in that heart, which draws such a cursed conclusion from the premises of Gods grace. The Saints have not to learn't Christ. The inference the Apostle makes from the sweet privileges we enjoy in the Covenant of grace, is not to wallow in sin, but having these promises, to cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and spirit. 2Cor.7.1. 'Tis the nature of faith, (the grace that trades with Promises) to purifie the heart. Now the more certain report faith brings of Gods love from the promise to the soule, the more it purifies the heart, because love by which faith works, is thereby more inflamed to God: and if once this affection takes fire, the room becomes too hot for sin to stay there.

SECT. VI.

The fourth note and last is, That it will abundantly recompence all the hardship and trouble the Christian endures in this war against sin and Satan, that he shall be able when the war is ended to stand. In mans wars all do not get by them that fight in them: the gaines of these are commonly put into a few pockets. The common souldiers endure most of the hardship, but go away with little of the profit; they fight to make a few that are great yet greater, and are many times themselves turn'd off at last, with what will hardly pay for the cure of their wounds, or keep them from starving in a poor Hospital. But in this war there is none loseth, but he that runs away. A glorious reward there is for every faithful souldier in Christs Camp, and that is wrap't up in this phrase, *Having done all to stand*. Now in this place, *to stand* imports three things, which laid together will clear the point.

First, *to stand*, in this place, is to stand Conquerours. An Army, when conquered, is said to fall before their enemy, and the Conquerour to stand. Every Christian shall at the end of the war stand a Conquerour over his vanquish't lusts, and Satan that

that headed them. Many a sweet victory the Christian hath here over Satan : But (alas!) the joy of these Conquests is again interrupted with fresh alarms from his rallied enemy. One day he hath the better, and may be the next he is put to the hazard of another battel; much ado he hath to keep what he hath got: yea, his very victories are such as send him bleeding out of the field : Though he repulses the temptation at last, yet the wounds his conscience gets in the fight, do over-cast the glory of the victory. 'Tis seldom the Christian comes off without some sad complaint of the treacher, of his own heart, which had like to have lost the day, and betrayed him into his enemies hand : But for thy eternal comfort, Know (poor Christian) there is a blessed day coming, which shall make a full and final decision of the quarrel betwixt thee and Satan : Thou shalt see this enemies Camp quite broke up, not a weapon left in his hand to lift up against thee. Thou shalt tread upon his high places, from which he hath made so many shots at thee. Thou shalt see them all dismantled and demolished, till there be not left standing any one corruption in thy bosome, for a devil to hide and harbour himself in. Satan, at whose approach thou hast so trembled, shall then be subdued under thy feet : he that hath so oft bid thee bow down, that he might go over thy soule and trample upon all thy glory, shall now have his neck laid to be trodden on by thee. Were there nothing else to be expected as the fruits of our watching and praying, weeping and mourning, severe duties of mortification and self denial with whatever else our Christian warfare puts us upon but this, our labour sure would not be in vain in the Lord. Yea, blessed watching and praying, happy tears and wounds we meet with in this war; may they but at last end in a full and eternal victory over sin and Satan. Bondage is one of the worst of evils. The baser an enemy is, the more abhorred by noble spirits. *Saul* feared to fall into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, and to be abused by their scorn and reproaches more than a bloody death. Who baser then Satan? what viler tyrant then sin? Glorious then will the day be, wherein we shall praise God for delivering us out of the hands of all our sins, and from the hand of Satan. But dismal to you (sinner,) who at the same time wherein you shall see the Saints stand with crowns of victory on their heads, must like fettered captives be dragg'd to hells.

hells dungeon, there to have your ear bored unto an eternal bondage under your lusts. And what more miserable sentence can God himself passe upon you? Here sin is pleasure, there it will be your torment. Here a sweet bit and goes down glib, but there it will stick in your throats. Here you have suitable provision to entertain your lusts withal: Palaces for pride to dwell and strut her self in: Delicious fare for your wanton palates: Houses and lands, with coffers of silver and gold for your covetous hearts, by their self-pleasing thoughts to sit brooding upon: but you will finde none of these there; hell is a barren place, nothing grows in that land of darkness to solace and recreate the sinners mindes. You shall have your lusts, but want the food they long for. O what a torment must that needs be, to have a soul sharp set, even to a ravenous hunger after sin; but chain'd up where it can come at nothing it would have to satisfie its lust: for a proud wretch, that could wish he might dominere over all the world, yea, over God himself if he would let him, to be kept down in such a dungeon as hell is. O how it will cut! for the malicious sinner, whose heart swells with rancour against God and his Saints, that he could pluck them out of Gods bosome, yea, God out of his throne if he had power, to finde his hands so manacled, that he can do nothing against them he so hates: O how this will torment! Speak, O you Saints, whose partial victory over sin at present is so sweet to you, that you would choose a thousand deaths, sooner then return to your old bondage under your lusts: how glorious then is that day in your eye, when this shall be completed in a full and eternal Conquest, never to have any thing to do more with sin or Satan!

2.

Secondly, *to stand*, is here to stand justified and acquitted at the great day of judgement. The phrase is frequent in Scripture, which sets out the solemn discharge they shall have then, by standing in judgement, *Psal. 1.5. The wicked shall not stand in the judgement*, that is, they shall not be justified, *Psal. 130.3. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?* that is, who shall be discharged? The great God, upon whose errand we come into the world, hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by Jesus Christ; a solemn day it will be, when all that ever lived on earth, high and low, good and bad, shall meet in one Assembly to make their personal appearance before Christ, and from

from his mouth, to receive their eternal doom, who shall in his Majestick robes of glory ascend the awful seat of Judicature, attended with his illustrious traine and guard of Angels about him, as so many officers ready to execute and perform his pleasure according to the definitive sentence that he shall pronounce, either to conduct those blessed ones, whom he shall justifie into his glorious Kingdome, or binde them hand and foot to be cast into hells unquenchable flames, whom he shall condemn. I do not wonder that *Pauls* Sermon on this subject did make an earth-quake in *Felix* his conscience: but rather that any should be so far gone in a lethargy, and dedolent numbnesse of conscience, as the thought of this day cannot recover them to their sense and feeling. O Sirs, do not you vote them happy men and women that shall speed well on this day? are not your thoughts enquiring who those blessed soules are which shall be acquitted by the lively voice of Christ the Judge? You need not ascend to search the rolls of election in heaven, here you may know they are such as fight the Lords battels on earth against Satan, in the Lords Armour, and that to the end of their lives. These having done all shall stand in judgement. And were it but at a mans bar, some Court-Martial, where a souldier stood upon trial for his life, either to be condemned as a Traitor to his Prince, or clear'd as faithful in his trust. O how such a one would listen to hear how it would go with him, and be overjoyed when the Judge pronounces him innocent! Well may such be bid to fall down on their knees, thank God and the Judge that have saved their lives; how much more ravishing will the sweet voice of Christ be in the Saints eares, when he shall in the face of men and Angels make publike declaration of their righteousness? O how confounded will Satan then be, who was their accuser to God and their own consciences also, ever threatening them with the terrour of that day! How blank will the wicked world be, to see the dirt that they had throwen by their calumnies and lying reports on the Saints faces, wiped off with Christs own hand, they from Christs mouth to be justified as sincere, whom they had call'd hypocrites! will not this, O ye Saints, be enough for all the scorne you were laden with from the world, and conflict you endured with the Prince of the world? But this is not all. Therefore

E e e

Thirdly

Thirdly, to stand, doth here also, (as the complement of their reward) denote the Saints standing in Heavens glory. Princes when they would reward any of their subjects, that in their wars have done eminent service to the Crown, (as the utmost they can do for them) to prefer them to Court, there to enjoy their Princely favour, and stand in some place of honourable service before them continually. *Solomon* sets it out as the greatest reward of faithful subjects, *to stand before Kings*. Heaven is the royal City where the great God keeps his Court. The happiness of glorious Angels is to stand there before God. *I am Gabriel, that stand in the Presence of God, Luke. 1. 19* That is, I am one of those heavenly spirits who wait on the great God, and stand before his face, as Courtiers do about their Prince. Now such honour shall every faithful soul have. *Thus saith the Lord of hostes, If thou wilt walk in my wayes, and if thou wilt keep my charge, I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by, Zech. 3. 7.* He alludes to the Temple, which had roomes joyning to it for the Priests, that waited on the Lord in his holy service there. Or to Courtiers, that have stately galleries and lodgings becoming their place at Court allowed them in the Kings Palace they wait upon. Thus all the Saints, (whose representative *Joshua* was) shall after they have kept the Lords charge in a short-lives-service on earth, be called up to stand before God in heaven, where with Angels they shall have their galleries, and mansions of glory also. O happy they who shall stand before the Lord in glory! The greatest Peeres of a Realmie, (such as Earles, Marquesses and Dukes are) count it greater honour to stand before their King, though bare-headed and oft upon the knee, then to live in the countrey, where all bow and stand bare to them; yea, let but their Prince forbid them coming to Court, and 'tis not their great estates, or respect they have where they live will content them. 'Tis better to wait in heaven then to reign on earth. 'Tis sweet standing before the Lord here in an Ordinance, one day in the worship of God is better then many elsewhere, O what then is it to stand before God in glory! If the Saints spikenard sendeth forth so sweet a smell, while the King sits at his Table here in a Sermon or Sacrament: O then what joy must needs flow from their near attendance on him, as he sits at his Table in heaven, which when God first made, it was in-

intended by him to be that Chamber of presence, in which he would present himself to be seen of, and enjoyed by his Saints in all his glory. I know nothing would have a more powerful, yea, universal operation upon a Saints spirit, then the frequent and spiritual consideration of that blissful state in heaven, which shall at last crown all their sad conflicts here on earth. None like this sword to cut the very sinews of temptation, and behold those lusts, which dare and out-brave whole troops of other Arguments. It is almost impossible to sin with lively thoughts and hopes of that glory. 'Tis when the thoughts of heaven are long out of the Christians sight, and he knowes not what is become of his hopes to that glorious place; that he begins to set up some idol (as *Israel* the Calf in *Moses* his absence), which he may dance before. But let heaven come in sight, and the Christians heart will be well-warn'd with the thoughts of it, and you may as soon periwade a King to throw his royal Diademe into a sink, and wallow with his robes in a kennel, as a Saint to sin with the expectation of heavens glory. Sin is a devils work, not a Saints, who is a Peer of Heaven, and waits every houre for the Writ, that shall call him to stand with Angels and glorified Saints before the Throne of God. This would cheer the Christians heart, and confirme him when the fight is hottest, and the bullets flie thickest from men and devils, to think, 'tis heaven all this is for, where its worth having a place, though we go through fire and water to it. *'Tis before the Lord*, (said *David* to scoffing *Michal*) *that chose me, before my father and all his house, therefore I will play before the Lord, and I will yet be more vile than thus*, 2Sam.6.21. Thus, Christian, wouldst thou throw off the vipers of reproaches, which from the fire of the wickeds malice flie upon thee; 'Tis for God that I pray, hear, mortifie my lust, deny my self of my carnal sports, profits and pleasures, that God who hath passed by Kings and Princes, to choose me a poor wretch to stand before him in glory; therefore I will be yet more vile then thus. O Sirs, were there not another world to enjoy God in, yet should we not while we have our being serve our Maker? The heavens and the earth obey his Law, that are capable of no reward for doing his Will. *Quench hell, burn heaven*, (said a holy man) *yet I will love and fear my God*; How much more when everlasting armes of mercy stand ready stretch't to

carry you assoon as the fight is over into the blisseful Presence of God: You have servants of your own so ingenuous and observant, that can follow your work hard abroad in all weathers; and may they but when they come home, weary and hungry at night, obtain a kinde look from you, and some tender care over them, they are very thankful. *Yea, saith one, (to shame the sluggish Christian) how many hundred miles will the poor Spaniel run after his Master in a journey, who gets nothing but a few crumbs, or a bone from his Masters trencher? In a word, which is more, the devils slaves, what will they not do and venture at his command, who hath not so much to give them, as you to your dog, not a crust, not a drop of water to cool their tongue? and shall not the joy of heaven which is set before the Christian, into which he shall assuredly enter, make him run his race, endure a short soule of temptation and affliction? yea sure, and make him reckon also that these are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in him.*

F I N I S.

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